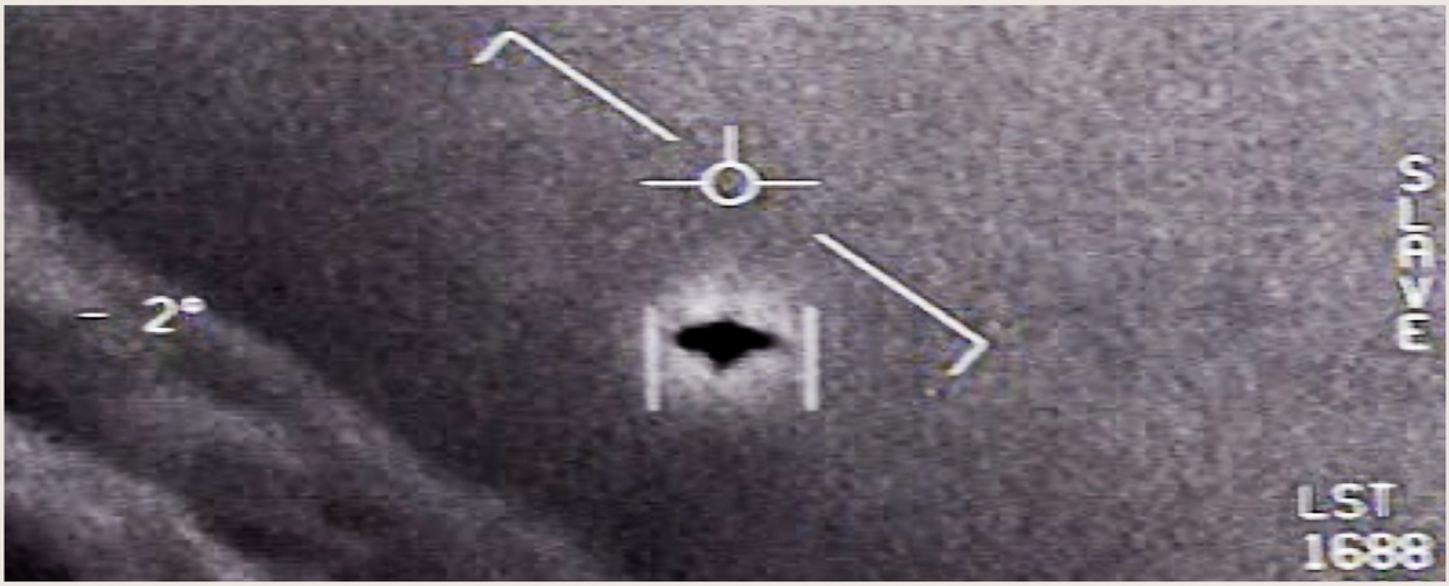
INSIDE THE PENTAGON'S HUNT FOR UFOs

IMMINENT



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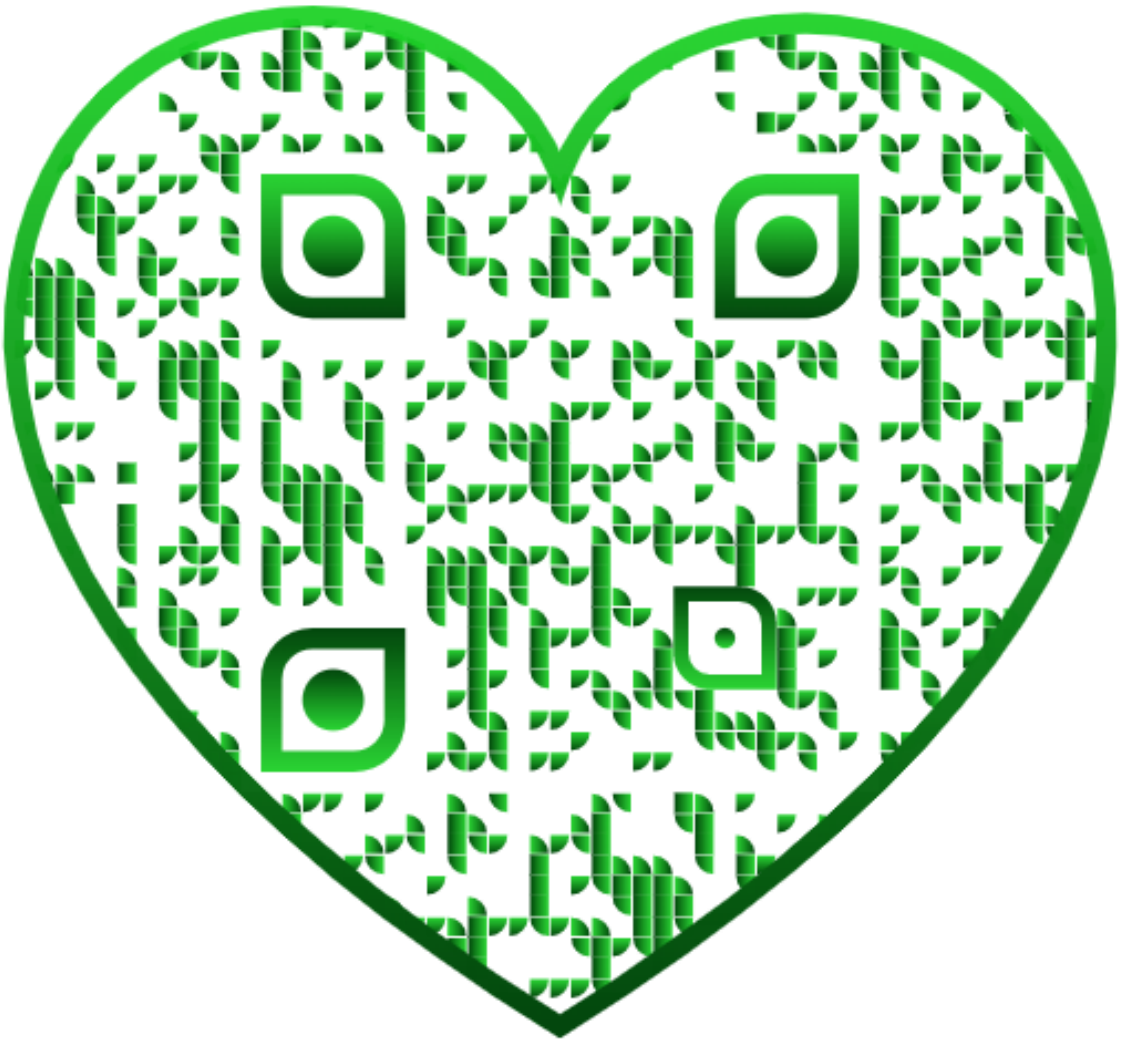

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

You may be wondering why I titled the book *Imminent*. The word itself is sometimes associated with another word, *threat*. Although at first glance it may appear that this book focuses on the potential threat of unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAP), or UFOs in the vernacular, that is not my intent. According to some of the common definitions of the word *imminent*, it usually means something is about to happen, or impending or inevitable. This is precisely why I chose the title. Regardless of whether one believes UAP represent a threat to our national security or, on the contrary, perhaps UAP represent a new opportunity for our species, we are at the point where the reality of UAP is now upon us.

The word *imminent* can mean many things, depending on who you ask.

Given the fact that Congress is now taking this topic seriously, one may presume that the conversation about UAP is now imminent as a national discussion. Some, in the theological communities, may view the topic as requiring imminent dialogue as a new paradigm emerges for humanity, while others may view UAP as being the beginning of a new imminent world view about our place in the universe. And for many in the UFO community, they may see this as a sign of imminent government disclosure about nonhuman intelligence.

Ultimately, I leave it up to you, the reader, to decide what *imminent* means to you. Maybe, after reading this book, you will walk away with a new meaning for yourself.

Lue Elizondo
April 2024

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FOREWORD

May 16, 2024

There is a debate among historians regarding something they call the “Great Man” theory of history. According to this perspective, history can largely be explained by the impact of courageous and inspired individuals who challenge the status quo, leading to irreversible changes that forever alter the course of human affairs. I leave it to the reader to assess for themselves whether Lue Elizondo is one of those people. At a minimum, I can say without fear of contradiction that Lue has played a central and indispensable role in forever changing the way humanity views the issue of unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAP). Indeed, revelations regarding the UAP issue may soon cause humanity to reframe its view of itself and our place in the cosmos. This incredible true story will, among other things, explain how the UAP issue was recently transformed from a scurrilous tabloid newspaper topic to a valid and important national security issue.

To fully appreciate the impact Lue and some of his colleagues have had on our understanding of UAP, you need to first understand the situation that existed at the time Lue began his journey. When I first met Lue at a closed-door Pentagon meeting early in 2017, the UAP issue was still regarded with unremitting contempt and disdain by the mainstream press, the scientific community, and the US government. This was nothing new: the UAP issue had been mired in a quagmire of controversy, wheels futilely spinning, accusations flying, since the 1940s. Admittedly, it didn’t help that a parade of UAP charlatans and frauds were seeking to exploit the issue for fame and money. No matter, from 1970, when the US Air Force abandoned Project Blue Book (its public relations effort to investigate and discredit UAP reports), until late in 2017, when Lue resigned his position on the staff of the secretary of defense, there was no meaningful change in either the stated

position of the US government or in public perceptions of the UAP topic.

True, sensational press reports of UAP activity would occasionally surface; there were also some ineffectual efforts to engage Congress, and even a significant but short-lived congressional earmark for UAP research, but there was no meaningful progress in recognizing the validity of the UAP issue from 1970 through 2017. Indeed, the UAP stigma was still so bad in 2017 that most commercial and military personnel were afraid to report their observations for fear of damaging their careers and reputations. Similarly, most civilian witnesses were reluctant to discuss their experiences with friends or family, much less file an official UAP sighting report. Meanwhile, the handful of people at the Department of Defense (DoD) who had a serious interest in the issue were careful to conceal it from any but a few trusted friends. Prior to 2017, when DoD personnel discussed UAP it was usually behind closed doors or in whispers.

This climate of hostility toward the UAP issue was a direct result of US government policies formulated by the CIA's Robertson Panel in 1953. Claiming to fear US air defense communications might be overwhelmed by UAP reports, this CIA panel advised the Air Force to enlist the Walt Disney Company and the mass media in a campaign to "debunk" UAP. A subsequent Air Force–funded UAP study at the University of Colorado went further, declaring the topic devoid of scientific merit. Chaired by physicist Edward Condon, it went so far as to recommend that academic institutions ensure students could not receive academic credit for studying the UAP issue. Dr. Condon's report provided the Air Force the excuse it sought to close Project Blue Book, its controversial UFO investigation. As time passed, Air Force contempt and hostility for the UAP issue became more explicit. By 1970, despite thousands of credible, unexplained UAP reports, the Air Force disingenuously took the position that UAP were simply the result of "a mild form of hysteria; individuals who fabricate reports to perpetrate a hoax or seek publicity; psychopathological persons, and misidentification of natural objects." In other words, according to the US Air Force, anyone reporting a UAP was either crazy, a fraud, or a fool.

For decades thereafter, notwithstanding the testimony of many US military veterans, and documentation unearthed by UAP researchers confirming UAP intrusions into the heavily restricted airspace surrounding US nuclear weapons facilities, the Air Force continued to staunchly maintain that "[n]o UFO reported, investigated and evaluated by the US Air Force has

ever given any indication of a threat to national security." It was not enough for the Air Force to merely deny a threat; the Air Force even claimed there was no indication of technology "beyond the range of present day knowledge." These were the formal positions of the US government in 1970, and they remained the positions of the US government in 2017, nearly a half century later, when I first met Lue. In short, we faced a prevailing establishment mindset that associated the UAP issue with irrational beliefs in subjects like poltergeists or astrology.

In 2017, at the time we met, I was an unpaid consultant for the Office of Naval Intelligence, hoping to still contribute in some way after retiring from full-time work on national security issues in the Pentagon and Congress. A mutual friend from the CIA, Jim Semivan, brought Lue to my attention. After finally overcoming the baffling and inefficient security procedures that bedevil anyone working intelligence issues for Uncle Sam, we were finally able to meet in Lue's Pentagon office.

It was an extraordinary meeting. Lue is heavily muscled, intense, energetic, charismatic, and effusive. He sports bold, colorful tattoos on his arms and carries himself more like a wrestler than a bureaucrat. He evinces a determination and intensity more often encountered in the ranks of combat units than in the civilian bureaucracy. He was wearing a variety of security badges and IDs on a chain around his neck, each a small totem of access and power in the national security kingdom. He has a natural gift for verbal communication that quickly became apparent.

What I learned as the meeting progressed was both astonishing and outrageous. Astonishing, because Lue presented incontrovertible evidence that strange, unidentified aircraft were routinely violating sensitive US military airspace. These bizarre, silent craft lacked any discernible markings or means of propulsion. We both knew these were not experimental US aircraft, based on messages from the fleet and our own extensive contacts and access to the world of classified Special Access Programs (SAPs). Consequently, there seemed to be three primary possibilities: (1) a potential US adversary, most likely Russia or China, had achieved a major technological breakthrough that might tip the global balance of power against America and the free world; or (2) we had visitors from an alien civilization who were keenly interested in US military capabilities; or (3) quite possibly UAP were a combination of mysterious terrestrial and nonterrestrial craft.

Given what we knew about Russian and Chinese capabilities, and the

locations and nature of some of these intrusions, the ET hypothesis actually seemed the most viable explanation for some cases. This was clearly true for a series of encounters involving the *Nimitz* Carrier Strike Group in November 2004. At the time, the USS *Princeton*, an Aegis-class guided missile cruiser, escorting the mighty aircraft carrier the USS *Nimitz*, detected a large number of maneuvering objects that appeared to be descending from low earth orbit. They were dropping vertically from extreme altitudes at fantastic speeds to around 20,000 feet, hovering briefly, then instantaneously accelerating, sometimes to extreme speeds. After several days of observation, two US Navy F/A-18s from the *Nimitz* managed to intercept one of these strange craft at close quarters in conditions of perfect visibility. For Navy Commander Dave Fravor, the 48-feet-long, wingless white craft he observed from the cockpit of his F/A-18 was so radical in behavior and appearance, so vastly more capable than any known aircraft, it seemed clear to this high-ranking officer and his fellow pilots that it was ". . . not from this world." Before the day was over, this amazing, noiseless, almost egg-shaped vehicle was seen by six naval aviators, tracked by multiple radars on multiple platforms, and videotaped by an advanced military infrared targeting system. During these encounters the object did things hereto-fore deemed impossible for any aircraft, demonstrating unprecedented speeds and maneuverability and surviving forces that would destroy many times over any aircraft or missile made by man. To date nobody has been able to offer a credible conventional explanation for these astonishing events.

Lue not only briefed me on this case and showed me an official report; he later arranged for me to participate in official debriefings with Commander Fravor, Lieutenant Alex Dietrich, and other Navy personnel who had seen UAP up close or on military sensor systems. Any lingering doubts about the legitimacy of the UAP topic quickly evaporated. It is one thing to read about a UAP incident; it is quite another to hear about it firsthand from US military personnel whose training, integrity, and reliability make them ideal witnesses. These individuals had no incentive to report these incidents. Indeed, they had a strong incentive not to report what they saw for fear of damaging their prospects for promotion. In light of this, and their exemplary skills and patriotism, it would have been grossly irresponsible to disregard their accounts.

As Lue described these military encounters and showed me authentic military "gun camera" UAP videos, I sometimes felt as though I were having

an out-of-body experience. Even though I had studied the UAP issue extensively as a private citizen, seeing this compelling official evidence at a secret Pentagon meeting was an almost surreal experience. At times I felt as though I were a character in a Hollywood sci-fi movie. I had long been intrigued by the UAP issue, but prior to this meeting UAP were an abstract concept. Now, very suddenly, the issue was becoming both concrete and profoundly concerning. At times I struggled to focus while Lue presented the UAP data he had accumulated over many years. My mind was churning, trying to recalculate and repair its suddenly altered map of reality. Could one or more intelligent species from another solar system have found us? If so, why would aliens be so acutely and persistently interested in US military capabilities? Was it merely curiosity regarding our most advanced technologies? Was it to gauge any potential threats they might encounter while operating in earth's atmosphere? Or was something more sinister occurring? Were these devices collecting intelligence on US military forces in support of some sinister plan? What could we do to determine the capabilities of these vehicles and the intentions of whoever was operating them? How could we overcome the bureaucratic hostility that was preventing this information from reaching senior policymakers in the executive and legislative branches of government?

The more I pondered the information Lue was presenting, the more my fascination and amazement turned to outrage and anger. After all, I had spent the better part of my adult life engaged in intelligence oversight. Yet the information Lue was presenting made it clear the intelligence community was once again failing to incorporate lessons it should have learned from a number of prior tragic disasters. This was, to my mind, a blatant failure of intellectual integrity in the face of clear evidence America was at risk from a new capability being deployed by one or more unknown actors. Yet, aside from Lue and a handful of his colleagues, nobody in the government seemed to care.

As the reader may know, it is not unusual for Russian Bear bombers to occasionally fly across the Bering Strait toward Alaska, prompting US fighter aircraft on strip alert to launch and intercept them in international airspace. The moment these lumbering Russian aircraft are detected, intelligence reporting mechanisms are immediately activated to ensure that America's military and civilian leadership is promptly notified. These Bear bomber intrusions are typically also reported in the press. By contrast, off our east

coast, America was suffering recurring violations of restricted US airspace, week after week, month after month, without any formal intelligence reporting or press coverage. In fact, I was shocked to learn that the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), responsible for guarding North American airspace, was not even notified of these intrusions. Whether it was Russia, China, or someone else, this was clearly unacceptable.

It quickly became clear that when it came to UAP, the mighty US intelligence apparatus was paralyzed and ineffectual. I could not help but be reminded of the fabled story of the emperor's new clothes. Only, in this instance, instead of the rank and file pretending to admire clothing that did not exist, some defense and intelligence personnel were pretending not to notice advanced aircraft that plainly did exist. In fact, encounters with these craft were becoming so commonplace, one military air base began posting warnings of the potential for mid-air collisions in an area that should have been devoid of any non–US military aircraft.

As a career intelligence professional, I was keenly aware of the tragic losses associated with past intelligence failures. On December 7, 1941, a young lieutenant operating a radar battery in Hawaii detected incoming Japanese warplanes but failed to alert his superiors, blithely assuming the incoming aircraft detected by the radar he was operating were probably just US aircraft returning from a training mission. As we all know, disaster ensued.

On September 11, 2001, America suffered the loss of thousands of lives that might have been spared if the CIA and FBI had only been willing to share information. I was in the Pentagon when American Airlines Flight 77 struck the building, so that failure was burned into my memory. Not only were thousands of lives lost on September 11, 2001, but thousands of US military personnel later died, along with tens or hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians, because this tragedy was exploited to justify an entirely unnecessary invasion of Iraq that could have been averted if the US intelligence community had correctly discerned that Saddam Hussein did not have a viable weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program.

Compounding these miserable and costly failures, the intelligence community then failed to warn policymakers that no reasonable amount of US military force could succeed in pacifying Afghanistan, much less convert it to a nation championing conventional American values and beliefs. One might have thought we'd have learned a lesson about the limits of

conventional military power against insurgents in Vietnam or, failing that, have noticed what happened to the British and later the Soviet Union when they invaded Afghanistan. I vividly recall calling my beloved uncle James Mellon, who had spent considerable time hunting in remote regions of Afghanistan, the day the Soviets invaded that war-racked, tribal country. When I asked whether he thought the impoverished Afghan people stood a chance against the mighty Soviet Army, he replied immediately and without hesitation, “The Soviets will never defeat these people.” This should have been evident to anyone who knew that wild and mountainous country and had studied its history. Why did we think we’d succeed where the Soviets, the British, and every other nation that tried to dominate Afghanistan had failed? The philosopher George Santayana might as well have been speaking of Uncle Sam when he penned his oftquoted phrase, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” These disasters demonstrate a shockingly poor record of performance for the world’s most generously funded intelligence community.

What I was learning from Lue was frighteningly reminiscent of these prior disasters. Once again, like Pearl Harbor, unidentified aircraft were being detected, in this case not once, but repeatedly, month after month for years, yet no warning was being passed up the chain of command. There was a total failure to disseminate this vital information to senior officials or even the North American Aerospace Defense Command.

Further, as was the case with the Al Qaeda attack of September 11, 2001, it was obvious that multiple agencies and departments had significant UAP information they were not sharing. For example, US Navy aviators were routinely encountering UAP off the east coast in designated military training areas. However, US Air Force F-22s with even more powerful sensors were using the same training areas. They had to be detecting these strange craft as well. It was clear that the Air Force pilots were either afraid to report what they were seeing or the Air Force was refusing to share their reports. Meanwhile, the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the National Security Agency (NSA) also appeared to have important UAP data they were not sharing. This seemed a clear echo of the problem that had proven so costly on September 11, 2001, when the intelligence community failed to prevent the deadly terrorist attack that destroyed the World Trade Center. Lue and I were

both determined to do whatever we could to prevent another disastrous intelligence failure.

In addition to the evidence Lue presented regarding recurring military encounters with UAP, Lue also made me aware of an investigation into the UAP issue that had been undertaken by an aerospace contractor using $22 million in DoD funds earmarked for UAP analysis by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid in 2008. For my purposes, the most notable and useful information developed by the Advanced Aerospace Weapons System Application Program (AAWSAP) was their thorough report on the *Nimitz* case. Unfortunately, despite being the result of a good-faith effort by the powerful Senate Majority Leader, the Honorable Harry Reid, the US Air Force and most components of the US intelligence community refused to support this congressionally funded UAP investigation. Indeed, the Defense Department worked to kill this short-lived program at its earliest opportunity. By the time we met, what remained of Senator Reid's inspired effort was a successor initiative Lue called the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program (AATIP). Lue and his colleagues were doing all they could to address the issue, but he lacked a high-level advocate from within or outside the Pentagon.

For the intelligence community to function effectively, its leaders need to leverage rigorous analytical processes and be willing to speak unwelcome truths to those in power. Yet, aside from Lue's group, this was clearly not happening with regard to UAP. Nobody in the intelligence community was even reporting these incidents, much less conducting an investigation into their origin, intent, or technology. As has happened too often before, in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, it seemed far too many people were willing to quietly "go along to get along" rather than challenging the status quo. Thankfully, Lue was willing to not only confront the system but ultimately even fall on his sword and resign in protest.

Naturally, as a veteran of the Defense Department myself, my first instinct was to work through the chain of command. It seemed a long shot but I thought I might be able to help Lue break through the suffocating DoD bureaucracy by getting him an audience with the secretary of defense. Under normal circumstances this would have been impossible, but I was friends with two highly capable and patriotic young men who worked directly with Secretary of Defense James Mattis on a near daily basis.

When that effort ultimately fell short, as you will see in the pages ahead,

Lue faced a draconian choice: abandon his efforts to awaken a slumbering national security bureaucracy from within or take the extreme step of resigning in protest to draw attention to these alarming intrusions. It was a fateful decision for Lue and his family. We discussed the options and had some heartfelt conversations as Lue weighed this momentous decision. We also discussed a plan I developed to get the issue before Congress and the American people in the event Lue resigned. Thankfully, Lue was not willing to sit quietly and ignore recurring violations of US airspace by mysterious, unmarked aircraft. Once Lue made his fateful decision to resign in protest, we immediately launched a concerted effort to get him and this critical information about UAP to Congress, the press, and the American people.

In the pages that follow, the reader will have the opportunity to follow Lue's UAP journey from the outset, many years before we first met in the Pentagon, to our fateful Pentagon and congressional meetings, then onward to the present day. It is a fascinating story, not only because of the profound and mysterious nature of UAP itself, but also because of the many colorful personalities involved; Lue's personal hardships and sacrifices; and the insights and lessons learned regarding the Defense Department and the intelligence community.

Thankfully, the truth has prevailed; DoD and the IC now acknowledge that UAP are real and the phenomenon is global. Military reports are pouring in—over one thousand since 2004 at last count. Serious investigations are underway. Even the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), once a bastion of UAP contempt, is now taking UAP seriously. This too is a direct result of our efforts, as NASA director Bill Nelson was a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee at the time we arranged for Navy aviators to brief Senate Armed Services Committee members and staff. These briefings by Navy aviators were the seminal event that legitimized the UAP issue for Congress and later NASA.

In sum, nobody can deny that in the short period of time since Lue departed the Pentagon in protest and we approached Congress and the national media, the UAP issue has been transformed. Today the topic is being covered by the mainstream press, championed by Congress, and adopted as a legitimate and important mission area by the Department of Defense, NASA, and the US intelligence community. We are hopeful that, as a result, definitive answers regarding this great mystery will finally be forthcoming.

How did this turnaround occur after so many decades, at a time the UAP

issue seemed hopelessly mired in controversy and conspiracy? What does our government really know about the UAP issue? Is it true unidentified craft are operating in restricted US military airspace? If so, how concerned should we be?

Nobody is in a better position to tell the story of the recent dramatic transformation of the UAP issue than Lue Elizondo, the author of this book. After reading this account you'll be in a much better position to assess the questions above for yourself. You'll also be able to judge whether Lue is an example of the "Great Man" theory of history, namely a singular individual whose intrepid actions changed the course of history. In my view, absent Lue's persistence and courage, the US government would still be denying the existence of UAP and failing to investigate a phenomenon that may well prove to be the greatest discovery in history. I find it heartening to see that as large and complex as American society has become, individual actions can still make all the difference.

Christopher Mellon
Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
for Intelligence and Former Minority Staff
Director of the Senate Intelligence Committee

IMMINENT

INTRODUCTION

In late 2008, I began a new job over at the Pentagon after several tours with other US intelligence agencies. Shortly thereafter, my life changed forever when I was recruited into a strange and highly sensitive US intelligence program unlike any I had ever been a part of. The program investigated the global mystery that is "unidentified anomalous phenomena," or UAP for short, also known to many as UFOs. For nearly a decade, I found myself on the front lines of the biggest paradigm shift in human history and learned the reality of our place in the universe.

Unidentified craft with beyond-next-generation technology—including the ability to move in ways that defy our knowledge of physics and to do so within air, water, and space—have been operating with complete impunity all over the world since at least World War II.

These craft are not made by humans. Humanity is in fact *not* the only intelligent life in the universe, and *not* the alpha species. Yes, I know that's going to take a bit of time to process, but buckle up. There is a lot more.

UAP, and the nonhuman intelligence controlling them, present at best a very serious national security issue, and at worst the possibility of an existential threat to humanity.

Although I had plenty of jobs that challenged me personally and professionally, this job transformed my life. It changed the way that I looked at the universe and humankind's place in it. It changed my view of how one becomes a good father, husband, and son. It also reminded me what it means to be a patriot and to truly serve your country, the obligation we in government have to always act in the best interest of the American people, regardless of the personal stakes.

Over time, my colleagues and I gained insight into *how* these mysterious UAP operate, and into the intentions of the nonhuman intelligence behind

them.

While there are valid reasons for secrecy around some aspects of UAP, I do not think humanity should be kept in the dark about the fundamental fact that we are not the only intelligent life in the universe. The United States government and other major governments have decided its citizens do not have a right to know, but I could not disagree more.

You might be thinking this all sounds crazy. I’m not saying it doesn’t sound crazy, I’m saying that it’s real.

CHAPTER 1

DAMNED IF I DO, DAMNED IF I DON'T

In my twenties, I joined the US Army and was recruited into various sensitive programs in military intelligence. Later in my career, I did three combat tours in Afghanistan and the Middle East and went on to work all over the world with America's most elite special operations and intelligence units.

As an operations officer and senior intelligence officer, I was assigned missions throughout the world, focusing on counterinsurgencies, counternarcotics, counterterrorism, and counterespionage. I ran intelligence efforts against enemies including ISIS, Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, the Taliban, and the FARC. I led classified investigations worldwide with partners that included the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). I worked within the Department of Defense (DoD), the Office of the National Counterintelligence Executive (ONCIX), the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). Eventually, I managed Special Access Programs (SAPs) for the National Security Council (NSC) and the White House.

Finally, in 2008, I returned to a job at the Department of Defense. While in that assignment, I worked for the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence (OUSD(I)), focused on an information-sharing operation between the DoD, DHS, and state, local, and tribal law enforcement authorities.

The feds had recently begun helping these smaller law enforcement agencies tap into larger, more sophisticated national databases, so folks on the ground could better do their jobs, and maybe track down drug dealers, terrorists, or spies operating within the US and on tribal lands.

At the time, I had a large corner office in a building the Pentagon rented in ******** ******** Arlington, Virginia. Among other things, the building housed various departments of Boeing Aerospace, including Phantom Works, the division that is charged with dreaming up Boeing's future tech.

My eleventh-floor corner office looked out at the Pentagon. In the distance I saw the Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, and the White House. My furnishings imbued my office with a distinctly nautical air. My family and I lived on Kent Island, Maryland, a small fishing community in the middle of Chesapeake Bay.

I entered the world in Texas, but I'm a Florida boy at heart, long drawn to the mysteries and beauty of the sea. Fishing, scuba diving, seeing the sun glinting off the waves—those were my guilty pleasures. My wife, Jennifer, and I tried to be on the water every weekend, if we could swing it. Since I couldn't be on Kent Island all the time, I figured I would bring Kent Island to my office. I had pictures of my wife and daughters, as well as seascapes painted by my father-in-law, who had been a fine amateur artist in his youth. A wooden ship's wheel hung on the opposite wall.

I also had something you'd probably never find on most people's desks: a hand grenade. It scared the hell out of visitors, because at a glance, most civilians would not perceive that it had been rendered safe by some of my Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) buddies in Afghanistan. You'd have to unscrew the blasting cap to see the empty guts that had once held the explosives. I kept it as a reminder of how fragile and violent life can be.

One early morning while I reviewed a proposal from DHS, my administrative assistant poked her head in my office to tell me that I had two guests waiting for me in our reception area. It was early 2009. I wasn't expecting anyone, and I was only on my first cup of coffee.

I remember staring blankly into the swirls of my coffee, waiting for one of my classified computer systems to fire up, wishing I didn't have unexpected visitors. The encryption that governed some of the technology I used was ridiculously secure, and it often took me ten minutes to pull up a single email.

My assistant knocked on my door again, and introduced me to Jay Stratton and his colleague, whom I'll call Rosemary Caine.

Looking up from my coffee, I saw a serious male in his midthirties, clean-shaven, with piercing eyes. Jay looked familiar, but I hadn't met him before. He wore a fine suit but seemed out of place in it. Instinctively I pegged him

as a guy who'd be more comfortable with a machine gun and a bandolier around his chest. Picking out a fellow operator is a game for those of us who've done the work. Something goes awry when one of us dons a suit. It's like forcing a German shepherd into a doggie tuxedo sweater. They can wear it, but it's unnatural.

Rosemary struck me as cool, calm, and beautiful. Only later would I learn that she also spoke fluent Russian and was a former intelligence case officer. Rosemary was one of the few intelligence professionals who would have been just as comfortable on the cover of *Vogue* magazine as sporting camouflage and wielding an AK-47. She could work in any environment, and that's what made her lethal.

"Good morning," Jay said, "we've heard a lot about you. It's good to finally meet."

Without realizing it, I acknowledged them with a single-syllable grunt.

"My apologies," I added. "I haven't had enough coffee this morning."

"Ah, Café Bustelo?" Rosemary said. "I love Cuban coffee."

I thought: How does she know I'm drinking that brand of coffee? The can was nowhere to be seen. A lucky guess, or something more? Had these two strangers been investigating me?

"Okay," I said. "What did I do now?" Half-joking, but not really.

"I'm sorry?" Rosemary said.

"You're obviously here for something, so what did I do now?"

Jay and Rosemary glanced at each other. The blue credentials around their necks were the giveaway that they were both government intelligence officials.

"You didn't do anything wrong," Jay said.

Rosemary approached my desk. "We're here to talk to you about something very important. A matter of national security."

Nothing new for me. Everything I did touched on national security.

Still, my visitors had piqued my curiosity.

A short while later, fresh Cuban coffee in hand, Rosemary said, "We are interested in your counterintelligence and security experience for a highly classified program led out of our office at DIA."

They had come to recruit me to support an intelligence program over at the Defense Intelligence Agency. When a DoD program needs a new person, they sometimes work their network of colleagues to find the right candidate. In this case, Jay and Rosemary's team needed a senior intelligence officer to

set up counterintelligence and security for one of their programs.

Jay explained that he helped create something called the AAWSAP, Advanced Aerospace Weapons System Applications Program, which would later become AATIP (Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program). I'd never heard of the program, and by the time the two of them left my office, I *still* had no idea of the program's mission. They described it as a small but highly sensitive program focused on "unconventional technologies," and said they reported directly to the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and to Congress. Some of my past experiences working for Army intelligence had involved protecting high-end and sensitive aerospace technologies, so I just assumed that had made me a candidate. Well, if that were the case, I hoped, the bureaucracy would be minimal. Red tape is the bane of every government official's existence.

Within the coming weeks, the three of us met twice more. Always in my office over more coffee. We got into the specifics about how I worked, my leadership philosophy, and some of my previous assignments. But we never directly discussed their mysterious program. If nothing else, they assessed my personality and confidence level. Was I the right person for their program? Probably not, but I didn't care much anyway. I wasn't looking for any more professional responsibilities other than the ones I already had.

Weeks later, the basic vetting hurdle apparently cleared, they invited me to meet their colleague. The meeting details were as mysterious as the job itself. They instructed me to arrive early, park in the lot across the street from a seemingly civilian office building in Virginia. I would show my credentials to the second security guard (not the first) and take the elevator to the tenth floor. This struck me as a bit over-the-top. Ever since 9/11, security had been tightened, but there is usually little reason to pretend you're James Bond while parking your black Crown Victoria.

On the tenth floor, I found myself in a long, blank hallway with a security door and camera at the far end. Rosemary answered my knock. She offered me coffee and escorted me through the door and into a government cubicle farm full of people working. Finally, in a glass office space along the far wall, I met Dr. James Lacatski.

He was a bona fide rocket scientist, with a doctorate in engineering, and looked every bit the part. Glasses and disheveled hair. A loosened tie. He knew it all, from the brute-force mechanics of Scud missiles to the intricacies of first-and second-stage solid fuel rocket booster engines. I later learned that

he was one of our government's top rocket scientists.

"Call me Jim," he said.

In a calm voice, he told me AAWSAP worked on sensitive aviation technology and needed a senior counterintelligence agent to lock down all intel about the program from the usual antagonists, foreign adversaries. They employed many outside contractors, but Jim deliberately handpicked a small cadre of intelligence officers to manage and oversee the work performed by contractors.

Nestled deep inside DIA, a member of the US intelligence community (the IC), AAWSAP drew its authority directly from Congress, according to Jim.

Nothing I'd heard up until now sounded unusual, except that I still didn't know what the program actually did.

After a brief discussion about my experience protecting advanced aerospace technology, Jim paused. The silence between us grew. Then he asked, "What do you think about UFOs?"

What the—? I thought. Is this a joke? Is he testing me in some way?

"I don't . . ." I said.

Jim pounced. "What? You don't believe UFOs are real?"

"I did not say that," I responded. "What I mean is I have no reason to think about them. All of my work has focused on other issues."

None of my professional projects had ever touched on the topic, nor was I particularly interested. In my personal life, I had never been fascinated by the topic. I never got into *Star Wars* or *Star Trek*, and hadn't even seen *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

Jim peered at me over his glasses. "That's fair. But don't let your analytical bias get the best of you. You might see things that will challenge your current perception of the universe, of reality. You *must* be prepared to change your opinion in the face of new data and evidence."

What he may or may not have known is that I did have some experience in looking beyond the average person's understanding of reality, which I'll get to later.

He explained that AAWSAP focused on "unusual phenomena" and investigated unidentified aircraft, specifically ones that seem to display beyond-next-generation technology and capabilities—what we now call unidentified anomalous phenomena, or UAP, or what were long referred to as UFOs. Jim explained that for decades, civilians, military personnel, and law

enforcement officers had reported strange sightings across the world, and there was actually data to support what they saw. Data collected by the same intelligence-gathering systems used to keep our country safe from our adversaries, arguably the most advanced in the world. Jim emphasized that what they focused on didn't conform to physics as we understood it.

My head spun. Holy hell . . . was this for real?

Jim suggested I take some time to think. If I wanted to know more, we'd do a second chat.

It struck me as the most low-key, matter-of-fact job interview I'd ever done. As I stood to leave, Jim offered one more piece of advice. "Word of warning," he said. "If you want to work with us, you can't be committed to *anything*, meaning any preconceived notions."

I don't think he smiled once the whole time we were together. He was dead serious.

* * * *

to work in intelligence for one of the government's three-letter agencies. He knew all my secrets, including the fact that I had been exposed to one exceptionally "weird" government program in my twenties. A program that did in fact help open my mind to the idea that there are many things about our universe that we don't know or understand, things that sound like science fiction, that don't conform to the twentieth-century Western view of reality, but are in fact real.

The next day, during our commute to work, I asked if John was responsible for the referral.

"Oh, they talked to you, did they?"

"A-ha. So it *was* you who sicced them on me. Thanks, buddy!" I said sarcastically.

He said, "They needed someone senior. Someone trained to run counterintelligence, someone who had been a part of *sensitive* programs. Someone who knows there's more to reality than the average person. That's *you*, brother."

"Sooo . . ." I said. "You told them about the *other* project of mine, back in the day?"

He smiled. "It might have come up briefly, yeah."

I trusted John even more than I trust myself. He and I had been on many of the same handpicked missions. John revealed to me that he was a liaison between the three-letter agency he worked for and AAWSAP. Hearing him vouch for the program made my head spin.

On a practical level, knowing the way the Pentagon worked, I assumed the job would *not* be full-time. It would be an add-on, a job I did on the side while I continued my current duties. The Pentagon often pressed agents like me into service this way, under the loophole "other duties as assigned." Typical government fiscal prudence. Why hire a new person when you have one person to do two jobs?

On paper, life was good. My job was interesting and uneventful. At this point in my career, uneventful had its advantages. And let's just say, I felt that a job where people weren't shooting at me was a good job. In my previous jobs, I had been everywhere on the planet where the US engaged its enemies. Afghanistan. Iraq. Kuwait. South Korea. Central and South America, and the Caribbean. One of my several tattoos reads "Acceptum Painetio," which is Latin for "with regret." It's homage to my service during the wars in Afghanistan and the Middle East. There are things many of us did

for our country that we wished we didn't have to, but make no mistake, if in the same situation, I would do it all again if needed. I wasn't a warmonger who glamorized war; I would never forget the faces of those who perished and respected the profoundness of all the lives lost on both sides.

By now, I had finally attained the coveted GS-15 pay level—the most senior rank a civilian could attain working for the Pentagon before reaching the Senior Executive Service (SES) or a political appointment. As a young man in the Army, I dreamed of reaching GS-15, and I was finally there.

Did I really want to mess that all up chasing flying saucers?

Well . . . maybe. Why? I was now seeing with clarity that GS-15 was not the Pantheon of the Gods. Instead, these much-vaunted practitioners more often made decisions based on political favors, not facts. That infuriated me immensely. I detested the bureaucracy. Countless hours of commuter traffic, department infighting, and the bureaucracy were getting old, despite the cushy aspects of the job. I'd almost rather engage in a firefight than play games with Beltway bandits. At least on the battlefield you know where the enemy is.

Five years prior to this, I'd returned from frontline operations in the Middle East that had left me close to burnout and flirting with a genuine case of post-traumatic stress disorder. I had gladly left the theater of war behind me, but I was beginning to realize that I also wanted more purpose in my day-to-day.

Compared to everything going on in my life, the UAP program sounded like an interesting escape. Such a program might be what I needed to jolt me out of my perpetual Groundhog Day.

A few days later, I met Jim Lacatski again. This time, Jim shared that the program enjoyed the support of the DIA's then director, Lieutenant General Michael D. Maples, and was funded through the efforts of a bipartisan group of senators: Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK), and Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI).

The program struck me as a rare bird, in that senators from both sides of the aisle had cooperated to make it a reality. In the United States, the two reigning parties rarely agree on anything. Yet for this topic, leaders had somehow made an exception.

During World War II, Stevens had served as a pilot in the Army Air Corps, flying US military cargo over the so-called Hump of the Himalayas from India to China, where it could be used in the US conflict with Japan.

The Himalayas are the most imposing, most dangerous, and arguably most isolated mountain chain in the world. Flying over them in 1940s aircraft would not have been a cakewalk. Stevens admitted openly that he had once seen a “foo fighter” while flying on a mission. That’s the term Allied pilots in World War II used to describe strange aerial phenomena—strange balls of light, orbs that followed aircraft, objects that defied what our own aircraft could do. UAP, in other words.

The patriot Inouye had literally given his arm for his country. He had witnessed both sides of the Asian American experience during that war. He served in the military while internment camps were our nation’s disgraceful solution for paranoia against Japanese Americans.

Reid had grown up boxing and worked as a United States Capitol Police Officer while putting himself through law school. He was also the senator of the state that housed Area 51, and that came with insider knowledge that piqued his curiosity. On Capitol Hill, Senator Reid was regarded as a bulldog in a pit of vipers. Whether you loved or hated his politics, you didn’t mess with Harry Reid.

Together, these three men controlled congressional spending for black-budget Pentagon programs.

In this second meeting, Jim Lacatski formally asked me to handle counterintelligence and security for the program. He was still mysterious and didn’t tell me the name of the effort I’d be focused on. I called Jenn and casually mentioned that I was thinking about taking on this additional duty. That was about all I could say to her, given the secrecy that governed my work life. She was supportive as always. When I got back to my office in Crystal City, I phoned Jim over our secure line and accepted the role: “Count me in.”

“What we do here is very strange,” Jim said. “You should be prepared for the possibility that some of that strangeness will impact your personal life. These portfolios are sticky.”

I frowned at that. *Sticky*? What a strange word choice.

I knew what he meant by the word *portfolio*. A *portfolio* is a term borrowed from Wall Street to describe the entirety of a program, from soup to nuts, as they say.

But I had never heard anyone use the word *sticky* to describe a portfolio. I had no idea what he meant to imply. Maybe he meant “controversial”? In retrospect, I should have asked.

1 Certain locations are sensitive and classified, hence the DoD redaction.

CHAPTER 2

COLARES

Shortly after I accepted the role, Jim and Jay invited me to a large group dinner for the team that was held in the private meeting room of a hotel in Roslyn, Virginia. I had no way to prepare for the meeting, and no idea what to expect. The program's leadership and a few of the Nevada contractors were meeting for the first time. The lead contractor was flying in on his private Gulfstream V jet to attend.

Since I now knew my friend John worked as a liaison between his agency and the program, we walked to dinner together. In the lobby we met Jim and Jay, who led us to a private dining room decked out with a long table set for dinner.

The dinner was a baptism by fire. The billionaire hotelier, developer, and aerospace magnate Robert Bigelow joined us. He was the contractor I had been told about. Tall, mustached, and shaggy-headed, Bob entered the room with a serious but friendly look on his face. I had never met a billionaire before and assumed that they were all the same—self-absorbed and cocky. Bob wasn't. He greeted everyone warmly and joined thoughtfully in the conversation. It was at this meeting I learned of Bob and his long obsession with UAP and paranormal occurrences, and that he was unafraid to spend his own fortune to unravel these mysteries for humanity's benefit. The National Institute for Discovery Science (NIDS), his research organization, had studied UAP and the paranormal back in the 1990s. Senator Harry Reid counted Bob among his friends, and Bob's firm, Bigelow Aerospace Advanced Space Studies (BAASS), was the program's prime contractor.

Also in attendance was Harold "Hal" Puthoff, a legendary figure in government and intel community research circles. He is a physicist, an engineer, and a man of deep mystery when it comes to some of America's most sensitive and controversial projects. For over fifty years, he worked as

the chief scientist on highly classified projects for the government. In various past capacities, he had regularly reported directly to the White House and the director of the CIA. This is a man who walks around with knowledge that the vast majority of the human population will never know. My respect and admiration for Hal is immeasurable. He was the program's chief scientist.

Hal earned his PhD from Stanford University in 1967. His professional background spans decades of research at General Electric, Sperry, the NSA, Stanford University, and SRI International, and he has served almost every government entity (for example, the Department of Defense and agencies within the intelligence community, such as the NSA) as a senior scientific advisor. He published numerous papers on quantum physics, lasers, and space propulsion, and had patents issued in the laser, energy, and communications fields, which I suggest reading.

When I was still a young soldier in the Army, my career path had crossed briefly with Hal's. But I met him for the first time in person that evening. The fact that I was about to rub elbows with Hal Puthoff impressed upon me the significance of the meeting. Despite his legendary status, Hal struck me as a friendly, easy to talk to, soft-spoken, humble, professorial gentleman.

Jim introduced us all to a Brazilian general by the name of Paulo Roberto Yog de Miranda Uchôa, and his daughter and personal translator. Highly placed in their government, and well regarded, General Uchôa was Brazil's top drug czar and a four-star general. In the 1970s, his late father, General Alfredo Moacyr de Mendonça Uchôa, launched the Brazilian Center for UAP Studies, and devoted more than thirty years of his life to that subject and other paranormal and mystical studies. The elder Uchôa had been known as "the Star General."

Like his father, the junior Uchôa embraced interests that went further afield than his military and antidrug work. He had become the point man for a massive archive associated with Brazil's most disturbing UAP encounters. The question I kept to myself: Was Uchôa involved in this case because of his family lineage and predisposition for the topic? Or was he the man regarded by his peers as the most qualified to "handle" Brazil's biggest UAP events?

At this point in time, Jim's program wasn't sharing UAP data with other nations, out of a concern for national security. The meeting with Uchôa was different. He happened to be in town for another meeting and Jim was able to put this dinner together last minute, but it turned out to be one of the most

interesting dinners of my life.

General Uchôa had befriended a Brazilian colonel, still living, who had originally investigated Brazil's most fascinating cases, spanning thirty years. They hoped to assemble as much data as possible to share with us, in a remarkable act of international cooperation. Bob Bigelow's team planned to compile a database listing every single factoid of the Brazil events, so it could be searched instantly and scanned for commonalities. When completed, this project would prove to be inordinately useful. Finding patterns in data is the key to analysis.

I learned that in the mid-1970s, for several years running, people living along the coast of northeastern Brazil noticed strange lights and aircraft that buzzed their small towns and villages at night. The objects ranged in size from baseball-sized orbs to huge aircraft that looked as if they could transport the occupants of an entire city. Flying discs, spheres, triangles, cylinders—the variety of the objects ran the gamut. Citizens in these rural villages were unaccustomed to nighttime illumination beyond the lights of passing cars and trucks. Now, suddenly, a villager walking to visit a neighbor after dark might be bathed in the glow of something massive hovering in the sky. For centuries, humans all over the planet have reported such things. But in Brazil, these flying phenomena seemed to be targeting human beings.

People reported being chased by a yellow orb. After several yards of pursuit, the light turned blue before delivering a nasty laserlike blast that burned victims or left them unconscious. Other people claimed that hovering aircraft attempted to lift them off the ground—with nets and hooks—and drag them up into the ships. Were these hooks and nets a metaphor for some advanced technology like a tractor beam, or were primitive tools like hooks and nets actually being used? It all seemed so strange to me.

As attacks increased, people quashed their natural curiosity and switched to outright terror. If a ship or orb or light appeared, they ran for their life. Dogs barked. Livestock scattered. Car engines stalled, forcing them to escape on foot or on the back of a beast of burden. One person reported that their donkey froze in place, paralyzed with fear; the witness then ducked under the animal's body to shield themselves.

It didn't matter where you sought shelter. The lights pursued people to their homes and farms. Beams shot through tiled roofs as if the roofs were made of gauze, and roved intelligently through interior rooms as if searching for something. A victim or some other target? Not sure.

People lived in fear. They knew from experience or hearsay that if the "laser" touched their skin, they'd be burned. Reports described blood being sucked from their bodies. Everyone called the lights *chupachupa*, which means *suck-suck* in Portuguese.

In 1977, the intelligence branch of the Brazilian Air Force descended on the region with twenty investigators and physicians led by Lieutenant Colonel Uyrange Hollanda. Initially, they planned to interview victims, catalog eyewitness accounts, and treat the wounded. The longer Hollanda's team remained in the area, the more they witnessed these horrors for themselves. They captured footage and hundreds of photographs of mysterious objects and aircraft, one approximately three hundred feet long. Once, when an aircraft appeared during the daytime on a local beach, villagers fled, but Dr. Wellaide Cecim Carvalho, who had been treating villagers nearby, bravely remained. She hid and watched because, as she later said, the shimmering object in the sky was too beautiful to look away. It dazzled her in a way that was almost hypnotic.

Brazil is the fifth-largest country in the world, the largest in South and Latin America, and densely populated. The wetlands alone are ten times the size of the Florida Everglades. Researchers estimate that 371 locations across multiple Brazilian states were frequented by these visitations, but the epicenter and the site of the most intense activity from 1977 to 1978 was the small coastal island of Colares, which then had a population of about ten thousand people. Today researchers refer to these encounters collectively as the Colares Incidents.

Before that evening, I'd never heard of these occurrences. At first, my rational mind fought to explain away what I was hearing. There had to be some other explanation, right? A group hysteria phenomenon, perhaps, where people in a small community all influence each other and exacerbate each other's experiences. Or the testing of very human-based technology. In the 1960s, both the US and the Soviet Union flirted with the development of psychotronic weapons. They wanted to see if it was possible to stand far away from your enemy, aim some kind of beam at them, and influence their behavior and perception. Had Colares been the result of the Soviets' late-1970s psychotronic technology? Had the Soviets waged a proxy war against the United States in Brazil? Had the whole thing been a terrifying psychological operation?

But what Uchôa described was not consistent with any known Soviet

strategy or capability. His scenario was closer to H. G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*. An airborne alien invasion.

I was appropriately skeptical, but, like I said, a few things in my past had prepared me to be open to what I was hearing. I also had great respect for the evidence that had been collected by scientists and trained investigators. As a special agent, I had come to appreciate the necessity to preserve data as evidence and remain fact oriented. Everything I heard that day had been vetted by researchers well beyond the Brazilian Air Force. An American researcher named Robert Pratt had alone interviewed 514 witnesses. The French scientist and accomplished researcher Jacques Vallée had also independently verified the happenings. Followed by waves of researchers since. By one estimate the body of evidence compiled on Colares includes more than 3,500 case files.

Uchôa's voice cracked as he spoke of the human toll. Dr. Carvalho treated about forty people in 1977. Most had burns consistent with exposure to either thermal or directed energy; the burns healed once the skin peeled off. But some were left with major scars. Others had rashes. In the fresh wounds of twenty-three people, Carvalho noticed that the center of the burn displayed two puncture wounds. And when she tested the victims' blood, she found that all of them had low hemoglobin, which suggested that their fear of the *chupa-chupa* was not completely unfounded.

Pratt's findings struck me as particularly harrowing. He logged more than three hundred animals found dead of unknown causes during this time. Thirty-four citizens complained of irritated eyes; five reported temporary blindness; eight reported a negative change in their vision. Forty-one complained of a prolonged feeling of nausea, and sometimes vomiting. Fifty-five individuals reported extreme headaches. I wondered if these people had experienced some form of radiation damage. If true, the kind of damage they were discussing was consistent with the harmful effects of, say, microwave radiation and the improper handling of medical isotopes or weapons-grade radioactive fuel.

Forty-six people described feeling heat when the lights of the aircraft focused on them. Twenty-eight people felt a pocket of cold air. About eighteen people insisted they'd been abducted by beams that sucked them into the craft. Pratt also verified that some of these people were found far away from the site of the original encounter, with no memory of traveling there.

Fourteen people remained in a catatonic state for short periods following an encounter; fifty-four suffered a temporary paralysis in some part of their body. Thirty-six people claimed chronic illnesses plagued them for years after. Of that group, ten people died. That struck me. These people were *dead*. Ostensibly from a UAP.

In some cases witnesses managed to catch a glimpse of their attackers. Descriptions of the occupants of these otherworldly vehicles broke down into two types. Beings that appeared to be pale, tall, adult humanoids, and beings with disproportionately large heads and frail bodies about three or four feet tall. As I would later learn, those two descriptions—the so-called Nordics and Grays—fit the profile of alleged aliens from countless close encounters the world over. If this was some form of mass hysteria, then it had been affecting the entire globe for decades.

Thousands of people in the region remained traumatized by their encounters.

Uchôa distributed a few vintage photographs of the evidence compiled by Hollanda's team. I found myself moved by the images of victims displaying their wounds and looks of resigned horror on their faces.

Talk of laser weapons sent my mind reeling. Back in Kuwait in 2003, I was assigned as the special agent in charge (SAC). One of my agents rang me in the middle of the night from one of our satellite offices in the middle of the desert, Arifjan. "Sir, you need to get out here *now*," he said. "There's something you need to see."

The drive was at least an hour and accessible only by a two-lane road that stretched into the desert darkness forever. Only when the neon glow of Kuwait City could no longer be seen beyond the barren horizon did we know we were only halfway to Arifjan. When I arrived at the coordinates I'd been given, I found a cordon of heavily armed American soldiers guarding a group of M1 main battle tanks. During the ramp-up to the US-led invasion of Iraq, the US employed staging areas to preposition military equipment and vehicles with names such as "Camp New York." At this camp, the US military would pre-position the tanks for their inevitable invasion into Iraq. The tanks were arranged in a platoonlike formation of approximately ten tanks deep by ten tanks wide.

Gathered at a corner of the formation loomed a cluster of Military Police (MP) and a few Toyota Prados cordoning off two tanks in particular. I rolled down my window and said, "What's the issue?"

The MP NCO on duty said, “Sir, you gotta see this for yourself.”

Coffee in hand, I followed. The MP flicked on a flashlight. “Look at this,” he said.

“I don’t see anything. What am I supposed to be looking at?” I said.

He stabbed his light at the side of a tank. “Look right *here*, sir.”

The beam revealed a small hole punched through the armored side of the tank. Perfectly round, no rough edges. Superficially, I saw no signs of heat ablation or metal vitrification. He angled the flashlight. The hole went straight through the body of the tank and out the other side.

What the hell?

It was as if someone had used a supersharp cookie cutter to take a core sample of the vehicle. The energy required to do such a thing would have been enormous. The M1 tank is the crown jewel of the American field arsenal because it’s designed to take a direct hit from a missile and survive. The sides and front are the most heavily armored sections of the tank.

I knew of only one thing that could puncture the side of a tank—a sabot round, which is a little like a spear made of solid tungsten moving at hypersonic speeds. But a sabot hitting its mark would have caused the complete and utter destruction of the tank and destroyed its interior. This incident was of an eerily different order. There was no other visible damage, but this vehicle was toast, its defensive armor compromised.

The scarier part of the incident? In his excitement to show me the hole, the NCO failed to mention that the tank next to it showed precisely the same sabotage. Whatever caused this seemed to penetrate the sides of two of our best tanks with one clean hole through both.

“What do we know about this?” I asked.

The only clue we had came from a goat herder, a Bedouin who had tended to his flock in the night. He told the Military Police he’d seen a brilliant green flash in the night sky, directly over the tanks.

Back then, I had assumed the goat herder was mistaken, or that the weapon had been some sort of high-energy laser cooked up by the Russians. Nevertheless, the two tanks were immediately taken to the port, loaded aboard a transport ship, and shipped to the Yuma Proving Ground in Arizona for analysis. I never did learn the findings. The powers that be classified the analysis a “Top Secret SAP.” SAP is short for Special Access Program, one of the most sensitive and highly guarded types of classified information.

My mind snapped back to our dinner meeting, and the green, roving lights

that had tormented Colares, Brazil. What if the goat herder was right all along?

In the 1970s, Brazilian officials shut down Hollanda's investigation and circulated a story that no unusual phenomena were found. They locked down the files until the 1990s. The long-retired Hollanda died of apparent suicide shortly after their release.

Uchôa casually admitted that the Brazilian government had covered up what happened in Colares. His comment surprised no one at our dinner. Of *course* Brazil buried the truth. That's what every government has done, and always will do.

I left the meeting having learned about a fraction of the highly secretive cold war that has been playing out globally since 1947. Through spy intelligence, we know the superpowers have long been in a race to reverse-engineer advanced "exotic" technology through efforts like foreign material exploitation. It now seemed this was also a possibility with crashed UAP.

Imagine a nation on earth having aircraft that move in ways no known vehicles can. Aircraft that zip hundreds, if not thousands, of miles in seconds. Diabolically clever weapons that no human nation possesses or is capable of neutralizing. The ability to withstand g-force loads of more than 1,000 g's, which would turn a human into the consistency of pudding. Imagine a craft with the ability to cloak itself, not just from radar but from the human eye. The ability to seamlessly travel in air, water, and space.

A military response to such power would be like pitting a child's kite against an F-22 Raptor. The thought gave me chills. Whoever controlled such technology could control the world for better or worse.

It was a lot to absorb, and the people at the dinner were too credentialed to ignore. It was then that I realized the significance of the job Jim was running and the work we had to do for the American people.

CHAPTER 3

A RELUCTANT WARRIOR

I probably should not have been surprised by the revelations I heard in that life-changing meeting. In hindsight, many moments in my life had finally led me here. Exactly where "here" was, I didn't know.

My career journey began in an Army recruiter's office in Miami in 1995. I was twenty-three years old.

Back then, I was built like a tree stump. I worked out four hours every day. When I wanted to look nice, I donned a size 48 jacket and a custom-fitted short-sleeve shirt. I worked as a bouncer at sports bars and nightclubs as I paid for a college degree from the University of Miami.

For all my achievements, I had grown into an angry young man struggling with lingering resentment over my parents' divorce and financial hardships. I couldn't pay my bills and tuition and felt like my life was going nowhere fast. I was fighting a lot and getting into trouble. I didn't really have a choice: the Army was my only way out.

Back in high school I had started getting into fights on and off school grounds. My wrestling coach, Coach Jones, saw I was headed down a troubled and self-destructive path and urged me to consider my high school's Junior ROTC program. I wasn't very good at wrestling, and in fact, at the time I wasn't really very good at anything, including school. In the mid-1980s, everyone considered JROTC the last train stop for bad kids, the final step before expulsion, juvenile detention, or worse. Underprivileged kids, and kids like me from "broken" families—all found our way to JROTC. In the 1980s, my school was still practicing the controversial system of "busing" children from other districts. Many of these children found their way to JROTC. Some of these kids became my only real friends. Some thoughtless teachers openly mocked JROTC kids as brainless, unteachable good-for-nothings. I desperately wanted to prove them wrong.

From the first day, I loved JROTC. Back then, we even had our very own rifle range on school property. Times were different. I became involved in the Drill Team and Cannoneers. JROTC saved me. The military mentors taught me the benefits of teamwork and living by a code. They judged us on our own merits. They taught us to ignore the teasing and be proud to serve our country. To outsiders, the "pickle suit" uniform on our backs made us look like mindless drones conforming to military propaganda, but we knew in our hearts that the uniform was like a secret society, uniting all of us. Black, White, Latino, Asian, rich or poor, male or female, average smarts or the second coming of Albert Einstein—we were all one. We had each other's backs, something I had never experienced in my life. Words like *loyalty*, *commitment*, and *dedication* became a creed to live by. In many ways, we were more of a family than the ones we left back home. Race did not divide us; the only color we saw was green camouflage. Tough inner-city kids, geeks, jocks, and nerds seamlessly hung out together. If someone messed with a fellow cadet, they would have to deal with an entire brigade of cadet "misfits." One for all, and all for one. It was the protection from bullies I never had before, and I soon began to take pride in myself.

Now almost out of college, I craved that camaraderie once again. My only real friends in college were from the Middle East. Our cultures were very similar and the influence of the Muslim world on my Spanish heritage was undeniable. Words like *pantalon* and *camisa* were actually Arabic words. Even our architecture and the idea of "Spanish tiles" were all owed to the years of Moorish occupation of Spain. My friends Khan, Mehmet, and David were the brothers I never had. We were all raised to respect our elders, be polite, give deference to the sick and downtrodden. Never before had I had such a deep friendship with individuals who were from across the globe. We forged a bond and brotherhood that helped me through the challenges and loneliness of college.

At that time, I also had a steady and wonderfully smart girlfriend, Jennifer, for the first time in my life. By night, Jennifer worked as a cocktail waitress at the same sports bar as me. An expert in American Sign Language, by day she taught and interpreted for hearing-impaired kids in the Miami-Dade public school system. She was by far more intelligent than me—and I *liked* that. At first, she and I bonded as coworkers and gym buddies. Her intellect left me flabbergasted. At the drop of a hat, she'd casually recite some scientific concept I had just learned at university-level physics, all

without the benefit of an absurdly expensive education. Needless to say, I was way out of my league, but we both felt our relationship could evolve and stand the test of time. And tested it would be.

But I still had my demons. Each night, when I took my post as a bouncer, I scanned the floor for trouble. Sports bar or nightclub, I didn't have to wait long. Those places attracted a steady supply of jerks who needed a reminder of how to treat other human beings. Nothing in life satisfied me more than giving a bully his just deserts.

In hindsight, my job probably served as an outlet to help even the playing field between the bullies, not so different from those in my youth, and the underdogs. For better or for worse, and for the first time ever, I had full control of my environment, and could remove anyone whom I saw as being a bully. I felt empowered.

As for the many combat skills the Army would teach, I had already learned much from my father and various martial arts programs he encouraged me to attend.

In his youth, my father, Luis D. Elizondo III, had fought with Fidel Castro against the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. He attended the Havana Military Academy, which Castro's son, Fidelito, had also attended. A revolutionary, he was committed to the freedom of Cuba and to Castro, until Fidel revealed his true colors. Once Castro aligned with the Russians and declared himself president for life, my father joined the resistance and ultimately Brigade 2506 and participated in the US-led invasion of the Bay of Pigs. The price for his decision was two years in Castro's prisons, where he underwent oral surgery without anesthesia and ate the occasional boiled horse hoof to survive. As bad as it was, he always said others had it much worse than him. The ordeal transformed my father into a volatile man, always yearning for a fight with authority figures. For much of my childhood, he sported a paramilitary-style black beard. Ironically, it made him resemble Castro.

Growing up in South Florida, I was an average kid. When I was young, I attended Hebrew school. My mother dressed me in corduroy shorts, turtleneck sweaters, and saddle shoes. She doted on me, calling me her "Pumpkin Pie," to the chagrin of my father.

To toughen me up, Dad exposed me to the other side of life. The side that involved mysterious meetings in smoke-filled rooms with exiled Cuban men brandishing firearms. I was seven years old.

Practical skills shaped my early tutelage. Dad taught me Morse code and how to use shortwave and CB radios. He quizzed me on the military phonetic alphabet until I could *Alpha-Bravo-Charlie* with the best of them. He enrolled me in tae kwon do. I learned to read a topographical map and use a compass. How to fix a car engine and how to hot-wire one if necessary. How to scuba-dive and drive a motorboat. How to do electrical and plumbing repairs.

While other kids my age read the Boy Scout Handbook, I paged through books Dad had pressed into my hands: *The Anarchist's Cookbook* and *How to Survive in Vietnam*. In a previous life, my father and grandfather had both been skilled bomb makers. So Dad would take me and some of my friends out to a remote parking lot and teach us how to construct our own rocket launchers out of PVC pipes, explosives, and a 9-volt battery. Or show me how to break into a house by levering a sliding door off its track with a screwdriver.

At seven years old, I stood at the kitchen table staring at what looked like a hundred pieces of cunningly designed black steel. They were components of a mysterious, larger whole.

I gave a glance at my father, who stood nearby. He gestured. "Go on," he said in his native tongue. "You know what to do."

I reached for the pieces I recognized and slid them across the tablecloth to where I could better work with them. I moved slowly, tentatively, at first. Every piece had its own way of fitting into the puzzle. Some screwed in. Others slid, pressed, or clicked in. Each satisfying sound meant I was on the right track. Each movement awakened muscle memory. I had done this before.

As the puzzle came together, my father watched with intent his only son, his only child. I wanted to make him proud. At long last the receiver cover fit in, and I beheld a fully assembled AR-15 assault rifle.

"Bueno," my father said with pride."Now do it again, faster this time."

At that table, on many days of my childhood, I trained to assemble his other weapons. His .32-caliber Beretta pistol, a beautiful Italian-made handgun. Then his AK-47. Followed by his Ingram MAC-11 submachine gun Uzi and KG-99. The more I learned, the more I *wanted* to learn.

One day, he tucked me behind the wheel of a motor vehicle for the first time, a 1972 Toyota FJ40 jeep, and taught me to drive a stick shift. I sat on a stack of pillows in order to reach the wheel and pedals at the same time.

Every weekend from that day forward, we drove to the beach or the backwoods near our home to do some off-roading. He loved driving the Toyota into the mud so I could learn via trial and error how to get it out.

When I was eight years old, he bought me my first motorcycle and watched from the sidelines as I crashed it and narrowly escaped with third-degree burns on my legs. Resisting the urge to run to my aid, he waited patiently to see how I would deal with it. Only after I had gotten back on my bike did he come over to see how I was. He was not a callous man, but he was deliberate in his efforts to teach me the lessons of life and how to deal with trauma.

At age nine I climbed aboard a rented Cessna for my first flying lesson. "Put your hands here," he said, "and pull up *here*. You feel the feedback? Okay, now . . . not too fast . . ."

In a matter of minutes I flew 4,000 feet over the beaches of Sarasota, scattering seagulls in my wake and feeling my heart pound in my chest. As a young boy, I knew the effective range and caliber of almost every rifle in the US inventory, and could assemble almost any weapon in under sixty seconds.

If you believe that the child makes the man, then I guess you could say that the course of my life was charted by the age of eleven.

Some of my childhood innocence was robbed by the promise of a reinvasion of Cuba.

Later I learned that my father was preparing me for something called "Alpha 66," a slightly rebranded Brigade 2506 in which the new generations of Cubans were to be trained for the reinvasion of their country. This would explain why I was taught to shoot machine guns in the Florida Everglades as a young boy. Take back the motherland and bring freedom to Cuba! That day never came.

My parents' marriage had been the romance of the century. Part Lebanese, part Ashkenazi Jew, part Cherokee, part French, part everything else, Janise (pronounced Jan-NEECE) had grown up in Kentucky. She was beautiful, a professional model and a onetime *Playboy* bunny in Chicago. According to my mother, her exotic looks were due to her family heritage being a mixture of Persian, Native American, and Scottish. In my early years, she decided to raise me Jewish. Luis Senior, the handsome and volatile ex-revolutionary Cuban, ironically worked in the hospitality industry in Florida. He saved every dime he earned and opened what became a successful Italian restaurant called Michelangelo's, located in the exclusive St. Armands Circle

in Sarasota.

The restaurant prospered. My father earned the money to indulge his paramilitary pursuits and to lavish upon my mother all the latest fashions, fine jewelry, and luxury automobiles. Between his tenacity and her classiness, the two struck others as the epitome of a power couple. In reality, however, both Janise and Luis were also married to that restaurant, perhaps even more than to each other.

Madness lurked under the surface with my father. The years of abuse in Castro's prisons seemed to have changed the wiring in my dad's brain. In the early 1980s, the movie director Brian De Palma had his people meet my father and his friend, both Cuban exiles, when De Palma tried to get inside the mind of the hotheaded Cuban character he conceived for the movie *Scarface*.

Ceaselessly querulous, my father's volcanic temper would often erupt at the most inappropriate times. On one occasion while taking me to see a matinee movie, he screamed at the teenage kid inside the ticket booth over the price of movie tickets and the price of popcorn. On other occasions, he'd buy me an ice cream cone, only to hurl it at the vendor when he suspected that he had been overcharged. He thought nothing of popping a guy in the face for some petty slight. I remember when cops arrived at the restaurant to arrest him. "There is nothing you can do to me that Castro hasn't already done!" he rabidly declared in front of all the patrons as the bracelets were tightened around his wrists. God help you if you laid a hand on *me*, his flesh and blood. Despite the training I'd received from my father, I was passive and still got bullied at school. I wasn't yet a fighter. At the bus stop, I was subjected to merciless torment thanks to my clothes and wacky hair. My mother thought I was cute. Bullies beat me up, stole my lunch money, and shook me out of my pants. I shut my mouth and sucked it up. I lived in constant fear at the hands of my tormentors. The ringing of the final bell was like a foreboding reminder that a myriad of older boys would be waiting for me outside by the buses to humiliate me once more. Doom and dread filled my afternoon hours before the final school bell.

Eventually my father found out when he noticed a bruise on me. I was petrified he would only make it worse if he said something. Reluctantly, I told him what happened, only after he assured me he wouldn't say anything. The next day, my father was waiting for me at the bus stop. In a whirlwind of obscenities and primal gestures, he threatened the bullies and even the school

bus driver for letting it happen.

On another occasion, while I was in middle school, my father noticed a red mark on my neck. The day prior, my phys ed teacher grabbed me roughly while I was in the school infirmary. The next day, my father showed up at my school's soccer field, viciously confronting my phys ed teacher and threatening to kill him. Dad's shouts reached the sky: "*Pendejo!*" as his mouth frothed. As the children looked on in fright and began looking at me, I wanted to be swallowed by the earth and disappear.

"Anything worth loving is worth fighting for, never forget that," he'd tell me. It was his motto. His code.

It did not help that I detested school. I couldn't write. I could barely read, and I couldn't spell. When I tried to read, the decoding mechanism in my brain stubbornly refused to shed light on human language. Where the rest of the class saw *c-a-t* and *d-o-o-r-k-n-o-b* and *h-o-u-s-e*, my brain mocked me and spat forth gibberish cloaked by *d-y-s-l-e-x-i-a*. Many times I faked illness to avoid the bullies and seemingly impossible schoolwork. I also lived in perpetual fear of bringing home more bad grades.

Balancing my father's volatility was my mother's soft-spoken and gentle nature. She was artistic and spiritual and was always there to comfort me.

Mom and Dad split when I was ten years old. My childhood military training ended. Both of them fell to pieces. Mom sold everything we owned at a flea market to keep me and her afloat, including my toys and clothes. Dad sold the restaurant and ran a used car lot until he sold that too, and ended up living in a trailer on a pig farm while he plotted his next move.

Mom's relocation to a cheaper neighborhood meant a new school district for me. But even there, the bullying didn't stop. On one particular day at my high school, influenced by the added stress of my parents' divorce and the circumstances that followed, I reached a breaking point. A classmate—a repeat offender in inflicting pain and embarrassment—approached me as usual and began his routine. Only this time, something strange occurred. My instinct to run away was no longer there. My instinct to "fight" instead of "fly" took over and to my surprise I fought back. The following rush of adrenaline was different now. Fear, humiliation, and dread were replaced by a sense of anger, pride, and justice: emotions that had been foreign to me.

Thankfully, schools have a way of helping kids like me. With JROTC, I learned to channel my anger. Fighting equalized the playing field I was forced to survive. Not being popular with the ladies, I would do almost

anything for their attention, including dumb, reckless things that would come back to bite me. I was a rebel without a clue.

In college, I intentionally chose the hardest majors out of spite of the years of discouragement and criticism I received from teachers and extended family. So I entered into the premedical program at the University of Miami, and double majored in microbiology and immunology. By this time, I did not speak to either of my parents about much. I was still very angry. I had grown afraid of my father after years of dealing with his unpredictable temper. I loved him; I just didn't want to be like him. I adored Mom, but her decisions, and mine, kept us apart in my younger years. She was often taken advantage of by her boyfriend du jour.

I knew after college I would need to make another big change if I wanted to avoid my impending fate as an "accomplish nothing" and "always getting into trouble" kind of guy. So when most of my friends were finding their careers, I saw no choice but to join the US Army.

After enlisting, I could say my life had indeed changed for the better. I finally had the purpose I had been craving since JROTC. I was initially offered an officer commission, given that I already had a college degree. But if I went that route, I would have no choice in my Military Occupational Specialty; in other words, they would assign me to the needs of the Army, which would have likely been in the medical corps. So, instead I enlisted as an Army grunt. I received the best training one could ever ask for. Weapon skills, hand-to-hand combat, lifesaving techniques, et cetera.

Once qualified as a soldier, I was trained as a counterintelligence special agent, what everyone in the Army called a 97-Bravo. I learned how to conduct surveillance and countersurveillance, read body language, and conduct source recruitments.

My first assignment was to South Korea, just after Jennifer and I, now married, had conceived our first child. Leaving her at home, pregnant, was one of the hardest things I'd ever done. It was the kind of sacrifice that every military family knows only too well. Off I went, heeding the call, and missing Jenn's entire pregnancy. I spent much of my time in Korea working with the Korean CIA (KCIA), with the Korean National Police (KNP), or on a Special Projects surveillance team. By the time I returned home, our new daughter was three months old. Jenn had a job at a bowling alley at our new military assignment, on post, and I worked two extra jobs on the side to augment my Army salary of $17,000 a year. I received special permission

from my commander to moonlight as a security officer and, once again, a bouncer in order to help make ends meet.

The 902nd MI Group out of Fort Meade, Maryland, was my second assignment, but my duty station was Fort Huachuca, Arizona. I conducted counterintelligence investigations in three states—Nevada, California, and Arizona—to protect the new technologies developed by our government. Laser weapons, unmanned aerial vehicles, rocket engines, and tons of aerospace. My primary job was to lock down sensitive, top secret technology from foreign spies who were targeting major defense contractors like TRW, Raytheon, Boeing, and Lockheed. I also investigated anyone with a security clearance who may have been involved in some sort of criminal behavior, and covered "walk-ins," which sometimes resulted in what was known as the "Nuisance File."

On one particular day, a nervous and disheveled ex-military guy entered my office and said, "You have to help me. The government's after me. I'm a contractor for the US Air Force and my code name is *Lone Wolf on the Range*."

"Why are they after you?"

"They want me to make planes invisible with my special mathematical formula."

Inwardly, I rolled my eyes. Wacky "walk-ins" were common; duty agents like me were expected to screen and triage these reports.

I remember this one because, a few weeks later, I received a visit from two Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI) agents.

"Did you ever talk to a guy who says he can make planes invisible?"

I nearly chuckled. "Yeah. Why, was he bugging you guys too?"

In a very serious tone and without hesitation, one of the OSI agents said, "That guy actually works for us, and we need whatever file you have on him." I laughed uncomfortably. *Is he in trouble? Off his meds?*

Their response was even more perplexing. "He is a contractor for one of our most sensitive technologies." Astonished, I sheepishly handed over the documents. They left with the file and any remnants of truth enclosed within it. I heard nothing more about the case. Looking back, knowing what I know now, I often think about that and what notes were made to *my* file.

About a year later, I was recommended by Lieutenant Colonel Michael Seage, a mentor of mine, for a new position in a specialized cadre I had never heard of, the Army's "Great Skills" program.

The phone call came late one afternoon. “Be prepared to meet in two hours.”

At a cheap motel in the middle of the Arizona desert, a burly, gray-bearded man waited for me. He looked like he would be more comfortable on a Harley chopper than in his suit. His face was worn, like an old leather wallet. He walked with a slight limp on his left side.

Eugene “Gene” Lessman, that husky intelligence officer, was the lead recruiter for all things “spooky” in the Army. In Vietnam, Gene had been a member of the elite Special Operations Group (SOG) and a Green Beret. He had also been a part of the infamous Project Phoenix, which targeted Viet Cong leaders. His compromised gait was caused by several gunshot wounds he sustained while leaping from a helicopter in the field. Gene was a man’s man and not someone to be trifled with. Gene had flown from Hanover, Virginia, to see me.

“You’re being considered for a government position,” he told me. “Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?” Thus began one of the most rapid-fire interrogations I’d ever experienced. Where was I from? What did I do when I wasn’t on post? Who were my parents? Why was it important to me to serve my country?

On and on the questions came, sometimes circling back to the very same ones. It was exactly the sort of elicitation technique we’d studied in one of my courses. You hit your subjects with a circular round of queries to see if their responses are consistent.

Great Skills was a long-running program that Army intelligence used to recruit young soldiers whom they had identified as having special talents and that they could train and use as soldier spies. How they teased out those abilities, I was never told.

“How about remote viewing? Know what that is?”

“Nope,” I responded.

I was later told by Gene that the Great Skills program was also called Grey Fox. Gene was a MICACP, which stood for Military Intelligence Civilian Accepted Career Program. Gene was a civilian intelligence case officer who worked for the Army. I later found out that Gene also spotted and recruited soldiers into another highly secret operation called Stargate, or at least what was left of it. He never made it clear if his efforts with Stargate were ever part of the official mission of Grey Fox. Stargate was embedded in the federal government, run for years by the CIA, and later the DIA. Recruits

were trained to spy upon enemies, but not in the usual way.

Stargate trained “supersoldiers” to spy on hard targets using their psychic gifts. No, I am not kidding, this was an official US government program.

They called the highly controversial technique “remote viewing.” The program, pioneered at Stanford University in the late 1960s, was led by none other than Hal Puthoff, whom I met at the dinner meeting I described earlier. Hal had been a Stanford University researcher and an employee of the NSA when he and his colleague Russell Targ were approached by the CIA and told that Russia had a remote-viewing program. The US needed to catch up and beat their efforts. That’s how it all started.

Extrasensory perception had won over supporters in government who were initially dubious, then shocked that the technique worked. No one understood the mechanism. The CIA didn’t care *why* it worked; the only thing that mattered was that it *did*.

When government-trained psychics focused their attention on a particular subject, they gleaned images, feelings, thoughts, and intelligence that were otherwise impossible to collect via conventional spy tradecraft. Stargate became so successful, Hal reported directly to the director of the CIA and the White House on a regular basis.

As a measure of the program’s success that can be talked about, its psychics once located a Russian supersonic jet that crashed somewhere over Africa. Our best satellites couldn’t locate it, and neither could the Russians. One of our remote viewers “saw” and pinpointed the exact location of the downed aircraft in the Congo. The US was able to sweep in and salvage this valuable target, based on the remote viewer’s visions alone. President Jimmy Carter famously referenced the case to the media. Remote viewers also located Brigadier General James Lee Dozier, who had been kidnapped in Italy by the Red Brigade in 1981. In the Persian Gulf War, remote viewers identified and located storage facilities that housed deadly chemical war agents. The success stories of remote viewing were legion and seemed almost magical. The stories I can’t share are even more mind-blowing.

Like all things government and that challenge the current status quo or make people question their sense of reality, Stargate had its detractors and enemies. Congress had pulled the funding for the psychic spy program sometime prior to my recruitment, and Gene was working tirelessly behind the scenes to keep a small cadre of remote viewers operational. While there was still time, Gene wanted me to become one of his psychic spies.

I remember questioning whether the Army would let me leave my current commitment. I still had two more years to serve on my enlistment contract. “What if the Army doesn’t want to let me go?” I asked. Gene rocked back in his chair and laughed. “Son,” he said, “we *are* the Army. The *secret* Army.”

To get some hours under my belt, Gene shared an old remote-viewing manual with me, but the real training would come from putting myself through the paces.

When the best remote viewers were in the “zone,” they could penetrate enemy installations and have a look around. They could locate personnel or vital assets. They could even allegedly disrupt or incapacitate the minds of adversaries. During a viewing session, a seasoned viewer could draw images, maps, coordinates, details of everything they had seen.

I doubted if I’d ever be able to rack up achievements that noteworthy, but Gene gave his best to train me. I remember meeting Gene at one of the old motels in Sierra Vista. He had me sit in a chair, my head bowed slightly, my eyes focused to an imaginary horizon. Soft focus. Nothing too intense. Nothing that would strain a single sinew in my body.

Behind me, I heard Gene’s voice.

“Go on,” he said. “Start whenever you’re ready.”

I kept my breath even and easy. I didn’t realize it at the time, but I was later told that to get in the zone, I often rubbed my thumbs and index fingers together. Like turning the dial on a radio that only existed in my imagination. I often perceived and even felt a slight current or flow that was called by the graybeards *a signal line*. I turned this invisible knob and rolled through the stations, one by one, catching disjointed fragments of sound, emotions, and even smells.

The trick to remote viewing was not to judge. You reported what came to you, free of judgment. No AO. No analytical overlay. Just let it come.

A good remote viewer must avoid the innate temptation we all have to see patterns. You must abandon all preconceived notions of what something *might* be. In daily life, pattern recognition helps to not over-load our brains with too much data. It serves as a filter, allowing us to recognize and isolate patterns that could prove dangerous to us. But the tendency of our brain to say, “Hey, I know what that is,” proves disastrous for remote viewing.

Sometimes Gene would give me an envelope and ask me to describe the location mentioned inside it. Only, I couldn’t open the envelope. A day later, he’d change the procedure slightly. I was to direct my attention to a

photograph Gene was holding but that I could not see. Before we started, he verbally gave me the geographical coordinates of the object in question. But without consulting a map, I had no idea where in the world I supposed to focus.

The place was not really relevant. The object was.

At other times, he would simply ask, “What’s inside the envelope?”

I know it sounds like an impossible task. But if I listened to the radio in my heart, in my mind, I nearly always gleaned something useful.

I breathed. I kept it steady. The radio dial stopped rolling and homed in. I envisioned the signal line like a glowing, whitish river that flowed like a circuit in the direction I was supposed to go. Not a physical river, but a river that I could feel, a river that would lead to strange places and strange people whom I never met.

With practice, I got better. I would later take the techniques I learned with me to subsequent assignments. After a while, remote viewing became second nature to me. I was able to put myself in the zone without any sort of protocol or ritual.

I was excited to join the ranks of the few elite remote viewers when I was given the unfortunate news that the program had been completely dismantled. I would be going to Panama as an intelligence operations officer. On that note, I took the job, and just like that, I was released from my obligations to the Army as an enlisted soldier and became a civilian official working for the Army (though I was actually paid for this work by the NSA, which I never understood). To this day, I have no idea if Gene had originally intended me to be one of his remote viewers or if he was merely assessing me. Nevertheless, it wasn’t for nothing; however, the skills Gene taught me I would use time and time again. While running counterintelligence operations, I routinely assessed counterintelligence reports. Let’s say an informant said a particular location was important. *Was it?* I’d shift into remote-viewing mode and try to put myself in that location. How did I feel about the intel now? Once, in the Middle East, I had a bad feeling about a specific location that five of my men were scheduled to investigate the very next day.

“We can’t do it,” I told one of my subordinates. “There’s something off about this. I don’t want you guys going in.”

“Well, that’s fine,” he said tersely, “but *someone’s* going in. Besides, the British already cleared the area yesterday.”

An allied team went in instead and encountered an IED.

In the following years, I was privileged to meet four other remote viewers who had been trained in the discipline. We often talked about our experiences with the technique. One afternoon we discussed the capture of a suspected terrorist who had been on the US government's radar for a long time. He was being held in a location thousands of miles from us. I had been to the location before.

As a test, we all gathered together in a secure facility at the Pentagon with our brown-bag lunches and attempted an act of group remote viewing. We directed our conjoined thoughts toward a specific terrorist in his cell. None of us had any sympathy for the ruthless killer, who gleefully took the lives of our comrades. I wondered if we would leave a real impact on him.

Something happened, all right. Months later, we learned that the terrorist had told his lawyers that the CIA had sent five angels to disrupt his sleep. Five figures washed in a white light stood over his bed and shook it violently, leaving him terrified. He felt that judgment was upon him. He shared the story with his attorney, and the tale later ended up in a mainstream newspaper article about a secret CIA program being used to harass his client. I told Hal Puthoff what we had done. He was not surprised.

The best practitioners of remote viewing—Pat Price, Ingo Swann, Joe McMoneagle—achieve incredible results. From a couch on the west coast, Price penetrated a secret NSA location in West Virginia and correctly described identifying labels on manila file folders locked in a subterranean cabinet. In one session, Swann claimed to have remote viewed Jupiter and described its very thin rings, which would only be spotted and confirmed by unmanned probes years later.

Gene used to tell me, "You know, people with your gifts are rare."

"I'm not gifted," I'd say.

"Oh, yes, you are!"

Turns out, we were both right. The reality was, a large number of the population was and is capable of remote viewing. The *training* was rare, not the gift. I once heard a compelling explanation of remote viewing. I was told it is a vestigial ability early humans relied upon before the development of spoken language. Household pets rely on this *sixth sense* to determine if another animal is a threat. Before humans had words, we may have had this ability too.

How many times in your life have you felt that words are not adequate to express your feelings? I'll bet you are gripped by that frustration a half dozen

times a month, especially if you're in a relationship with someone you love.

We consider language a great achievement of evolution, but what if we could connect wordlessly with others at great distances?

An interesting thing about remote viewing is that it must be used for purely good intentions, and not for bad or for personal or selfish gain. Call it karma or something else, all remote viewers learn this one way or another. Whether or not they practice this is another thing.

Remote viewing deserved science, not scorn. Yet closed-minded zealots stormed in and trampled Stargate to death. In the waning days of the program, one member of Stargate was stunned to hear a government supervisor's reason for opposing further funding. "You are working with people who are in league with the devil," the boss said.

As crazy as it sounded then, I later heard similar nonsense from high-level government officials determined to shut down our UAP investigation, but we'll get to that later. Needless to say, it is not good for the United States or humanity to have these sorts of closed-minded officials who reflexively fight and dismiss anything that questions their personal religious beliefs. To say it holds back progress and growth is an understatement. It also gives our adversaries an advantage since they do not have these moral hurdles.

Former government psychic Joe McMoneagle, who has authored a fine book on the subject, once attended a meeting in which he received two conflicting opinions of his gift.

A senator snarled at him, "You, sir, are doing the work of the devil and you will burn in the fires of hell!"

As McMoneagle stepped into the hall, he was approached by another lawmaker who embraced him warmly and whispered in his ear: "You are doing God's work, son!"

While Stargate lost its funding, the truth is the government and military never stop using a tool that works. Why would they? Our adversaries don't. Programs just move and change names.

Only close friends of mine like John Robert knew my past work history. In fact, I taught John *how* to remote view and he's extremely good at it. I could write an entire book on remote viewing, but the point is that I was stunned to learn that I could perform this work, and that it unofficially contributed to my military assignments.

CHAPTER 4

THE SECRETS WITHIN

The new job at AAWSAP/AATIP was like one of those Russian dolls, one tiny secret tucked within another. Soon after I started working with them, Jay and Jim began briefing me on the program in a SCIF. That's short for Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility. These are bland conference rooms that resemble acoustically tricked-out shipping containers. They block sound and radio and electromagnetic waves. Sometimes you have white-noise machines to further drown out any opportunity for someone to eavesdrop on you. When you enter a SCIF to discuss top secret matters, you show your credentials, relinquish your cell phone, and don't utter a word until someone ensures everyone is appropriately cleared and closes the vaultlike door from the inside.

While the program was primarily focused on UAP, a small part of the effort also investigated unexplainable phenomena at a 480-acre property in Utah called Skinwalker Ranch. Bob Bigelow was the contractor running point on the investigation and had bought the land in the mid-1990s so that his scientists could study some of the unusual occurrences long associated with the property.

At the beginning, that's all I knew. It would be months before I fully comprehended the breadth of the Utah study.

It turns out that since the contract started in 2008, teams of researchers had been going out to the ranch to investigate and collect data on anomalous activity, including UAP sightings. AAWSAP's investigators treaded the property with a good deal of perfectly functioning, modern electronic equipment, determined to figure out why visitors would see strange apparitions and report terrifying experiences that not only injured people, but followed them home and began to harass their loved ones. I later learned that Jay had coined the term that now describes this—"the hitchhiker effect."

What a mind-blowing revelation. The US government had committed itself to studying and analyzing anomalous activity that bordered on paranormal. Jim and his team had gone down this path for the simplest reason imaginable: the science warranted further investigation of these strange phenomena, and they could not yet rule out the possibility that these anomalous events and UAP were inextricably linked.

When I wasn't chasing down leads at Jim's suggestion, I spent my time reading historical government records on UAP, which I had access to thanks to my credentials. A lot can be learned by studying history, especially history not widely known by the public.

At Jim's suggestion, I used my government computer to search terms including *unknown technology*, *unusual performance*, *anomaly*, *unidentified*, *UFO*, *UAP*.

The words *lights* plus *sky* yielded good results. The terms *unidentified* plus *radar* were also good for digging up incidents that were not flagged by their original writers as UAP incidents.

I was dumbfounded by how many compelling reports resided on top secret servers I had access to. However, I was also aware of which "hot words" could get you into trouble. Hot words could alert other individuals that you were poking your nose into areas for which you lacked clearance. This would trigger an extensive investigation into your activities to determine whether you had a "need to know" or were trying to get information about someone else's program.

I also made it a point to learn as much as I could from our outside scientific consultants. In the Pentagon, we referred to senior or emeritus staffers as "graybeards." Keepers of knowledge, wise retainers of sensitive information that was never written into any reports. I could sift through reports till doomsday, but I owed it to myself to lock down in a SCIF and get the lay of the land from these graybeards over a cup of coffee.

The list of in-program graybeards was short. One was a man I'll refer to as William "Will" Livingston. For years he presided over the little-known "weird desk" at the CIA, in charge of investigating unusual medical issues, implants, and abductions, all related to UAP encounters and anything strange. It was the real *X-Files* of the CIA. He was the keeper of all those secrets. Will is a patriot of the American cause, passionate about his work and pursuing truth. A medical doctor and surgeon based out of Detroit, Will was part of every program that was too sensitive to be publicly acknowledged—hence

his involvement.

At the time we met, he was in his sixties and had seen the best and worst of government bureaucracy—and it showed. He came across as a curmudgeonly grandfather, jaded and frustrated by a system he had spent so many years defending and supporting. Will had little patience for incompetence. But he was also exceedingly kind and patient if you were willing to learn. When we first connected, I told him how the Colares, Brazil, case shocked me. I had assumed that if UAP were indeed real, they zipped in and out of our atmosphere harmlessly. I didn't know that they could harm or kill people.

"It just never occurred to me that there would be biological effects," I said.

Will hinted that I was in for a rude awakening. "UAP aside, any technology that can perform like that," he said, "something for which we have no explanation of how it works . . . Why would you presume there *wouldn't* be any negative biological consequences if you fool around with it?"

Good point, I thought to myself.

In the back of my mind, I of course wondered if the government had captured or retrieved UAP or their occupants. Did we ever conduct autopsies on deceased crash victims? You can't grab a rotisserie chicken and a case of beer in this country without spotting tabloids in the super-market checkout screaming about yet another alien autopsy. Were they true? If there was anyone on this planet who would know the answer to that question, it would be Will. In fact, at the time I wondered if Will himself had performed any such research.

I restrained myself from asking those hot-button questions. I was too new to the team. My colleagues would share the truth in time when they came to know and trust me. I felt sure of it.

I also spent as much time as possible with Hal Puthoff. It wasn't until much later that I met Eric Davis, an astrophysicist with high-level national security clearances who also worked with Hal as a contractor for the program. Eric's reputation was well known in the IC, and I was told that he even provided the Presidential Daily Briefing (PDB). Eric has long consulted with a number of aerospace and defense contractors, including the one founded by Hal, EarthTech. Younger than Hal, the mustached, spectacled Davis was known to wear Hawaiian shirts in settings where others sported

dress suits. I learned and began to appreciate that Eric was never afraid to be who he was, a genius maverick. He rejected political gamesmanship, and with him, what you see is what you get. Over time he would become my trusted friend.

I considered Eric one of the greatest living researchers and one of the most honest men I have ever known. He has an eidetic—that is, "photographic"—memory, and remembers details beyond normal human capabilities. He was also an excellent intelligence officer, good at ferreting out secrets that have been hidden in the UAP world. In recent years he has become best known in UAP circles as the alleged author of the legendary Wilson/Davis memo.

The story goes that in the late 1990s, Eric met and chatted up Vice Admiral Thomas R. Wilson, who was Director of Intelligence (J2) for the Joint Staff.[1] After their conversation, Eric wrote up a thirteen-page summary of their talk, which he confidentially shared with a small group of like-minded, UAP-interested colleagues and officials. Hal and Eric gave a copy of this memo to Dr. Edgar Mitchell, the famous American astronaut who was part of the Apollo 14 mission and a close friend and confidant of Hal and Eric. The sixth person to walk on the moon, Mitchell was a naval aviator, an engineer trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and a Presidential Medal of Freedom honoree. He was also a longtime champion of the UAP topic, due to his childhood growing up on a ranch in the Roswell, New Mexico, area and what he had since learned as an astronaut. He once confided to Hal and Eric that his family was among the Roswell families who were threatened by the FBI after the famous Roswell crashes. FBI agents visited ranchers in the region, going door-to-door to deliver the threatening message: if you speak about the crashes, you will be killed. Plain and simple.

When Mitchell died, his safe was opened and the memo was found and circulated publicly by his estate. That is how the memo leaked.

The Wilson/Davis memo created a sensation for good reason. Vice Admiral Wilson, curious about certain black program line items in the budgets that crossed his desk, began asking questions. He got a meeting with representatives of a certain aerospace corporation—and their attorney. Wilson put his cards on the table: Just what were they doing with this specific line item?

He discovered that the contractor was part of an extremely secret program focused on retrieving and reverse-engineering crashed advanced vehicles of

unknown origin and not made by humans. I learned the larger program is referred to as the Legacy Program and involves various elements of the US government and US defense contractors. The contractors took the wreckage into their possession, and the security enveloping these projects was beyond top secret. In fact, the contractor's attorney brashly informed the admiral that if he continued to ask questions, it could get him fired and cause him to lose his pension. The admiral backed down. He confided the details of this encounter to Davis and never spoke of it again, even after the memo leaked.

The memo is terrifying on many levels. The American taxpayer has been footing the bill for these retrievals and the subsequent analysis and reverse-engineering efforts but with no proper congressional oversight. Even worse, people and government programs die, while corporations endure. Long after anyone in the government with knowledge of the program retires or dies, these materials remain in the vaults of these corporations and in a sense become private property. Imagine the value of the objects in the custody of these companies and what sort of advancements they have been benefiting from off the back of this. Imagine, too, the level of bureaucracy that would permit a US admiral to be threatened by a corporation for asking questions related to his own budget and work he legally has oversight of on behalf of the American people.

When I first heard about this I was reminded of Dwight Eisenhower's famous farewell speech, a few days before he left the Oval Office in 1961 after half a century in the service of the country. He thoughtfully warned the public: "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."

The Wilson/Davis memo was another reminder of the power of American military defense contractors that were grandfathered into the efforts to recover and reverse-engineer crashed or otherwise recovered UAP, ostensibly giving them incredible advantages over their competitors and the rest of humanity. These companies truly have more power than the government officials who are supposed to be overseeing them. In reality those officials get no oversight or awareness at all. Defense contractors' iron lock on UAP materials supersedes every kind of normal or routine security protocol in the government.

I didn't know it then, but I would butt heads with the military-industrial

complex over the UAP issue in the years to follow. In the spring of 2022, the Wilson/Davis memo would finally gain more attention from the media and the public when it became one of the talking points during public hearings on the UAP issue in Congress and was submitted into the Congressional Record. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

To get back to Eric Davis, I can say that he has certainly attracted a fair amount of attention himself. In 2020, he was plucked from obscurity when he told a *New York Times* reporter that the government was in possession of "off-world vehicles not made on this earth."

After Eric learned more about what was going on, he went on to brief DoD agencies and staff members from both the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on this very topic as well. Eric attended several senior-level meetings, to which I was invited, with various branches of the US military. During these meetings, Eric detailed the Legacy Program's long-running efforts involving UAP. Within the IC and DoD, his credibility is unimpeachable. And since then, Hal and other credible, highly placed individuals have informed me of the same information.

I don't recall how my first UAP history lesson in a SCIF with Hal began, but I remember Hal tossing off the most enticing one-liner I'd ever heard:

"Well . . . it all goes back to Roswell in 1947."

"Wait—Roswell was real?" I asked.

Hal looked at me, clearly weighing whether to bring me further into his circle of trust.

"Yes, Lue, it was real."

"You mean to tell me that a UAP actually crashed and we covered it up?"

"That's exactly what happened," he replied.

I went quiet, and let his words sink in.

Hal went on to tell me something else that truly blew my mind. Four deceased nonhuman bodies were in fact recovered from the 1947 Roswell crash.

After processing that, I fired off a slew of questions. In head, out mouth . . .

"Have we recovered nonhuman bodies from other UAP crashes?"

He looked at me as if debating how to answer. It was clear to me he wasn't ready to tell me the answer. I was still the new guy. "We'll tell you more soon enough," he said.

“Is every incoming president told the truth?”

“No.”

“Well, what about Congress? What about the Gang of Eight?” I said, referring to the legendary bipartisan group of political leaders supposedly charged with knowing all of America’s black programs.

Hal explained, “The sad truth is, DoD regards presidents, elected officials, and political appointees as temporary hires. They do not need to know since they will not be in their position for very long. Unless something happens or they really push for it, US presidents do not get briefed, and those who have been briefed have only been given the most basic information.”

Like Neo in the movie *The Matrix*, I inhaled that red pill. “Tell me more!”

That’s when I started to learn about the US government’s secret history with UAP. At the dawn of the nuclear age, UAP started appearing in greater numbers—and sometimes they crashed. Roswell was one of those incidents. A UAP fell that day in the vicinity of a government test facility in New Mexico and broke into two crash sites. At first, government investigators assumed that the Roswell craft were from another nation, possibly some sort of reconnaissance mission gone awry. But within hours, the US Army realized the truth, that these craft were not made by humans. It was hypothesized that the UAP that crashed at Roswell had been conducting some sort of reconnaissance on our budding atomic program when the unexpected happened. An electromagnetic pulse generated from one of the nearby test ranges had inadvertently intervened with the craft’s technology and caused it to crash.

Though a “flying saucer” story had already spread widely in the media, some days later the government disseminated a cover story about recovering nothing more harmless than a weather balloon. To convince the public, they trotted out pieces of Mylar for journalists to photograph. For years later, the government claimed that the downed craft was part of “Project Mogul,” an early attempt by the US Army Air Corps to detect Soviet atomic testing by affixing microphones to high-altitude balloons. The government has revised the Roswell cover story at least twice more in the ensuing seventy-odd years, replacing the first lie with more clever lies.

Roswell codified how this nation and all others would react to future UAP incidents going forward. The US government scripted the universal UAP playbook in the hours and days following that mysterious incident in New Mexico:

1. Admit nothing and deny everything.
2. Make counteraccusations.
3. Retrieve the pieces of the crashed craft.

4. Whisk the retrieved materials away to undisclosed locations.
5. Work in secret to reverse-engineer this vastly superior technology. I down all scientists and engineers who come near the recovered wreckage
6. Intimidate witnesses into saying nothing. Discredit those who don't along. Make them look crazy. Paint abductees as country bumpkins or g seeking frauds. Stigmatize outside researchers who attempt to intellig glean truth. Stigmatize the topic.
7. Threaten anyone who utters a single word about this topic with the Espionage Act and the promise to execute anyone who defies their sec oath, by reminding them of what happened to Julius and Ethel Rosenber selling atomic secrets to the Soviet Union.

Deny, deny, deny. Create and increase a stigma that will prevent disclosure.

Five years before Roswell, the US Department of War hid the Manhattan Project—the successful US mission to build the world's first atomic bomb—utilizing multiple secret facilities in multiple US locations staffed by thousands of patriotic American men and women, but despite its success we did learn that there were enemy spies in the Manhattan Project, so the UAP secret had to be kept even more secret than that. Think about the context for 1947—we had just won World War II and the Cold War was starting. We had to maintain our position as the most powerful military force on the planet.

Some like to think secrets are like fine wine, and the longer they remain secret, the better. I disagree. There were legitimate reasons for all the secrecy for a very long time and there are still good reasons for secrecy of some things we don't want our enemies to know. But I believe some of the secrets have an expiration date. Like vegetables in a refrigerator, the longer they remain, the more they stink.

The cover-up and disinformation campaign has been so successful that most scientists do not even know UAP are real. We need everyone to at least know this is all real so we can get a whole-of-government approach, much more funding, and the brightest minds in our country contributing to us winning, as we won the space race. China and Russia do not have the same

stigma and can employ their scientists to work on this topic for them.

If the Legacy Program would come out of the shadows and work with us to reveal the truth to Congress and the public in a controlled and safe way, we'd no doubt have more funds appropriated and more brainpower actively working the issue. We can do this in a way that still protects and keeps secret the details that need to be kept secret from our enemies.

To grasp more of the history of UAP, I chased down FOIA requests. Under the US Freedom of Information Act, anyone can request documents from the federal government, which might take months to years to generate them. These documents are legendary in popular culture for their heavily redacted nature—the black marker that some government censor swiped through critical parts of the text. What most people don't know is that we kept the majority of our files "FOIA Exempt" through various legal loopholes, established procedures, and formal exemptions, in an effort to keep prying eyes out of our business. This is a good thing, because FOIA allows anyone, regardless of whether or not they are a US citizen, to put in a request and ostensibly gain insight into our government's efforts.

For the UAP documents and files that did manage to see the light of day, the redacted material was often overly general. Protecting sources and methods was always a top priority for the censors, but the documents often contained vital details I was looking for—what actually went down during the sighting or incident. Many of these documents were unclassified, regarded by the government as quaint, harmless relics of a bygone era. The CIA and FBI sometimes slapped them up on their websites, for the whole world to search for and download. I suspect it was an attempt to demonstrate some sort of transparency. I soon became dismayed by the number of historical reports I uncovered. Not only had the US government been good at tracking and investigating these incursions into controlled US airspace; it was also very, very good at hiding its findings.

If you really dug into a case, you discovered details with modern-day relevance. Take the case of Lonnie Zamora, a police officer in the small town of Socorro, New Mexico, about an hour south of Albuquerque. In April 1964, Zamora chased a speeding car through the desert. Around dusk he spotted what looked initially like a car wreck in a nearby arroyo, or ravine. He stopped his vehicle, radioed his location in, and advised the radio operator back at the station that he would investigate the object. He drove closer and stepped out of his police car. From his new vantage point above the arroyo,

what had looked like an overturned vehicle now resembled a large egg or Tic Tac–shaped object with a metallic white surface, spindly white landing gear, and some cryptic writing on its side. That's when Zamora observed two figures dressed in white uniforms nearby. Seeing Zamora, the pair dashed aboard the vessel. Outwardly the craft had no visible means of propulsion, but it nevertheless rose from the ground with a roar, spewing blue-orange flames and leaving behind scorched vegetation in its wake.

This event fits the profile of the quintessential "close encounter" case. Zamora—a police officer, a trained observer, a man of faith, and a solid local citizen—was viewed as a highly credible witness. But if you didn't know him, you might feel compelled to dismiss the case. After all, who's to say that this lone witness in a remote location didn't make the whole thing up, aided and abetted by his fellow small-town citizens?

A rational person would be wise to be suspicious of an account related by a *single* witness in an *isolated* location. You also would be suspicious of a case with *little to no investigation*.

The Zamora case attracted a plethora of investigators. Local law enforcement, of course. The FBI. The US Army. The Air Force. Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the lead scientist in charge of the Air Force's official UAP investigation team, Project Blue Book, visited the region. Civilian UAP organizations conducted their brand of study as well.

Zamora quickly impressed everyone as a no-nonsense gentleman. Investigators immediately dismissed thoughts of him orchestrating a hoax or being an attention-seeker. He patiently answered questions put to him and would for the rest of his life.

Before the new story spread, other witnesses in the region came forward. Motorists saw an "egg" streak across the landscape just before or after Zamora's encounter. Others heard a loud roar that they took for an explosion. Another witness in a nearby town reported seeing a bizarre object in the dead of night that frightened his family's horses. The object, described as a white butane tank, landed on the family's property, then streaked away shortly after. This "egg" shape pops up in reports over the decades, arguably most famously in the 2004 case of sightings by naval aviators off the coast of San Diego. In the days that followed Zamora's encounter, the story appeared in newspapers and radio and television broadcasts throughout the United States. Zamora never tried to profit from his encounter, nor did he seek out media attention.

Lone witness cases are abundant in UAP history, but many, many sightings can be corroborated, as Zamora's case was, by other witnesses. Other cases are along the lines of the Colares Incidents—events observed by numerous witnesses and investigated by several overlapping agencies or investigators. Or events that occurred in heavily populated urban areas. In many cases, the witnesses are trained observers—military or law enforcement professionals trained to collect facts and draw conclusions based on analysis and empirical data.

March 1952: Two fiery discs zigzagged low over uranium mines in the Belgian Congo, where much of the raw material for the US's first atomic bombs was extracted. At one point, the UAP stopped over an open part of the mine, as if to peer into or perhaps map it. They zigzagged away. A fighter plane gave chase but couldn't keep up with the craft's erratic changes in elevation. Finally, the UAP left the human pilot in the dust, racing toward Lake Tanganyika—the second-deepest freshwater lake in the world—at a speed close to the speed of sound. The pilot surmised that the objects had to be robotic because no human pilot would have been able to survive the g-forces of a craft moving in such a way—quickly, erratically, and going from a lulling standstill to an impossible rate of speed in seconds. UAP activity around uranium mines and large bodies of water continues to this day.

July 1952: Harry S. Truman was president. Multiple UAP resembling lights penetrated downtown DC and buzzed the White House and the capital city over two consecutive weekends. There were hundreds of eyewitnesses, and many local newspapers put the story on their cover. The strange objects did what no known aircraft then or since can do: they soundlessly parked themselves in the air, then zipped away at incredible speeds. When Air Force pilots pursued them, the objects abruptly changed direction and disappeared. In some cases, the lights split in two, each piece going in a different direction. One pilot shot at them, later justifying his action as a last-ditch measure because he knew that his state-of-the-art fighter aircraft had no hope of overtaking them. Interestingly, I heard reports that when the pilot shot at one of the objects, a piece of one aircraft fell to the ground and was recovered. But after a thorough investigation, officials chalked up the DC incident to . . . *flocks of birds*.

October 1954: Fans at a soccer game in Florence, Italy, spied a smooth, white, cigar-or egg-shaped vehicle over a stadium. Same deal: no obvious wings. The game stopped while onlookers watched as the object shot around

the sky. Are we supposed to believe ten thousand rabid Italian soccer fans hallucinated the whole episode?

When witnesses describe these sightings, they express shock because nothing in their experience of watching conventional aircraft matches what they've just seen. It is often said that UAP defy physics. I don't agree with that. I think UAP defy our current understanding of physics. The challenge is reconciling that, outwardly, they do not possess any of the same characteristics we use to describe an aircraft. No wings, no control surfaces, no obvious forms of propulsion, no rivets in the aircraft skin, no cockpits. They simply do not resemble the planes and helicopters we're used to seeing overhead. Instead they appear as disembodied lights, various shapes described as a disc, a triangle, a cigar, a boomerang, etc.

The Air Force had studied UAP in 1948 and 1949, under the auspices of two year-old studies known as Project Sign and Project Grudge. Sign's findings were inconclusive but open to the possibility of extraterrestrial origins for the craft. Grudge swiftly swept in and debunked the phenomena as the result of natural causes. Now, as we embarked on the Cold War in the 1950s, the US government became overwhelmed by civilian reports of flying saucers like the one Lonnie Zamora saw. Investigating the backlog of cases threatened to be a massive drain on manpower and technological resources, at a time when the US felt compelled to keep its eyes fixed on the Soviet Union. Solution: we palmed the UAP "problem" off on Project Blue Book.

In the 1990s, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, ex-KGB leaders inform the world about a cigar-or rod-shaped UFO interacting with several MIG fighter pilots, allegedly even obtaining gun camera footage of one.

March 1966: Neighborhoods in Michigan were terrorized over several days by strange craft that dove, hovered, climbed, and disappeared—only to reappear. One of these objects briefly landed in a nearby swamp. When a farmer and his son went to investigate, they observed a pyramidal object that was wingless, jetless, propeller-less. How could it fly? At the insistence of a leading Michigan congress-man named Gerald Ford, Dr. Hynek's Project Blue Book reviewed the matter thoroughly, and unfortunately announced that the witnesses had seen . . . *swamp gas*. A clear cover-up, it was an effort to tell the American people, "There's nothing to see here, folks."

A report prepared by Australia's Department of Defense in the 1970s summed up the Blue Book strategy as follows: "By erecting a façade of ridicule, the US hoped to allay public alarm, reduce the possibility of the

Soviet[s] taking advantage of UAP mass sightings for either psychological or actual warfare purposes, and act as a cover for the real US program of developing vehicles that emulate UAP performances."

Australia is one of the "Five Eyes" intelligence partners; that is, five nations—including the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States—that have a long history of sharing intelligence cooperatively. We can rely on their frank assessment of the American program.

Bottom line: Professor Hynek wanted to do real science. The Air Force wanted him to debunk UAP, silence witnesses, and beat the truth back into the shadows. And so we got tales of swamp gas and flocks of birds and weather balloons. To his credit, Hynek later regretted the role he played in suppressing evidence under the aegis of the US Air Force.

The whole time, we lied to ourselves and basked in the glow of our presumed dominance in the field of nuclear energy, while far more intelligent life observed and interfered.

Though it is not common knowledge among civilians, UAP have trifled with nuclear weapons all over the world, bringing the global superpowers close to war.

There are many events I am not legally able to speak about, but there are some I can.

March 1967: UAP resembling zigzagging "stars" appeared over Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana. One of the objects, emitting a bright red light, hovered over missile silos. Shortly after, multiple US government Minutemen intercontinental ballistic missiles—our ICBM nuclear warheads—went offline, one after the other. Inoperable.

September 1971: Despite almost all of the planet's population having no clue, a treaty was signed by the US and the Soviet Union, titled "Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." Article 3 of the treaty states, "The Parties undertake to notify each other immediately in the event of detection by missile warning systems of unidentified objects, or in the event of signs of interference with these systems or with related communications facilities, if such occurrences could create a risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the two countries." This language is a direct result of UAP interference with nuclear weapons in the US and the Soviet Union, and both nations being well aware of the stakes for humanity.

United Kingdom, 1980: UAP appeared out of the night sky over a very sensitive joint UK-US military facility near Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk, England. These UAP hovered specifically over an underground bunker where the two allies had secretly stockpiled nuclear weapons. How did these airborne visitors know the location of the weapons, and what was their intention? Multiple servicemen saw the UAP up close and have since gone public despite being told not to talk about it. Very few people know that all communications on the base went to "flash override," which completely shuts down all communications lines so that only the president of the United States can communicate directly with someone on the base. The flash override protocol was designed to give the president the ability to control nuclear weapons in the event of a surprise attack. After the event, it was reported by servicemen on the base that an identified private plane landed on a runway just outside the base and that a group of men, said to be from a defense contractor, exited the plane and were driven onto the base. The same men were later seen loading crates onto the plane before leaving for the US. The next day, the servicemen who were eyewitnesses were called to the base's office of the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI). Some of the servicemen have since revealed what happened in that room. They were told to never speak about what they saw, and they were administered some sort of drug and hypnotized, presumably to distort their memories. The ones I personally spoke to said there was someone from the CIA in the room with the men from OSI. Years later, one of the servicemen saw a photo of a certain CIA official who had long worked on the UAP topic and claimed that CIA official was in the room the day after the event.

More than thirty years later, the late Senator John McCain successfully had the service records of one of the service members involved in the incident declassified. As a result, two witnesses were awarded permanent disability by the US government for their involvement and injury at Rendlesham.

Ukraine, 1982: UAP flew over Byelo Air Base in the former Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Seconds later, the launch sequence for the base's missiles switched on without any human ever entering the launch codes. Operators frantically rushed to shut the system down but could not. When the launch sequence reached its very last rung, it shut down of its own accord. We know that this happened.

On more than one occasion, the US dispatched bombers in anticipation of

a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union before the US realized that UAP had caused the Soviets to ready their missiles in error. Those nuclear missiles activated were pointed at us. That's how close we've come to disaster. On other occasions, UAP have taken US nuclear weapons offline, so we couldn't launch if the president had given the order.

Life as we know it would be over if any of these events led to nuclear war. All because of the actions of UAP, which so many people are foolishly inclined to believe are harmless.

At first blush, a UAP shutting off a nuclear missile does indeed sound like the work of benevolent beings who wanted to teach us a lesson. "Adults taking matches out of the hands of children," some say. That's a nice hopeful thought, but reality has proven us incorrect. At no time have UAP stopped our nuclear ambitions. As examples: They did not stop us from dropping atomic bombs on Japan. UAP did not stop us from making the leap from atomic to nuclear weapons. UAP did not stop the disasters at Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, or Fukushima. UAP did not stop the proliferation of nuclear technology from getting into the hands of more nations. Most recently, UAP have not interfered with North Korean, Indian, or Pakistani nuclear testing.

And switching *on* nuclear missiles? That is not so benevolent.

Coincidentally, every time a nuclear reactor has melted down or a catastrophe has occurred, witnesses spotted UAP in the vicinity for days or months after. Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima were all UAP magnets.

"What's the connection between UAP and nuclear technology?" I asked my other colleagues.

They shrugged. It was one of the eternal UAP mysteries. Were aliens paying attention to these sites because our testing of nuclear technology had perhaps caused their aircraft to crash? Were these highly evolved visitors genuinely concerned that humans would annihilate themselves and ruin the planet? Did they simply want their toys back? Do they somehow draw power from these sites?

We have no clue, I was told back in 2009.

Then there was the weird connection to water.

Summer 1981: A TWA pilot nearly collided with a round glowing object studded with windows over Lake Huron, the second largest of the Great Lakes.

March 1988: A Coast Guard team summoned to investigate a large object and other smaller lights spotted by a family along Lake Erie watched as the "parent" object appeared to descend close to the lake ice, causing it to rumble and crack. The smaller lights, which resembled triangles, lingered nearby. Shortly after, the large object seemed to land on the ice. The smaller objects zipped inside it, and they all later disappeared. The ice below seemed to heave and crack under an invisible weight. Was it due to something physical? Or was it a result of ultralow-frequency acoustics that perturbed the thick ice?

All of these were weird, but one of the early observations in our group was that UAP and water go together like waffles and syrup. Sometimes, as in the case of the Congo mine or, as we'll discuss later, nuclear vessels at sea, the UAP sighting is associated with *both* nukes and water.

Unlike Lonnie Zamora in 1964, or those thousands of Florentine soccer fans in 1954, modern military witnesses to UAP are equipped with some of the most sophisticated imaging tools known to humans. They can capture evidence of these UAP with radar, infrared imaging, and high-resolution gun cameras. And unlike the 1950s, we now have hyperspectral imaging capabilities on the ground, at sea, in the air, and even in space.

There has never been a better time to be in the UAP investigation business. But our findings eventually collide with the same old questions. Just who exactly are we dealing with? Or, a better question, just *what* exactly are we dealing with? Are we dealing with one species of beings or several? Are they from another planet or are they from earth? Is it possible these objects are not extraterrestrial but extradimensional?

And why do we see aircraft of such varying designs? Is it one species that uses different configurations of craft to perform different types of missions?

It seemed every time we asked a question, ten more questions arose.

When I was reading those old government reports, the prevailing wisdom among government experts was that UAP aircraft are too variable to have the same origin, but maybe they share a common understanding or advanced physics, and the technology works the same way between the different configurations of aircraft. That theory lends itself to the *multiple* species/*multiple* planets hypothesis. But if that's true, where are they all coming from? Why are they paying more attention to us since the dawn of the twentieth century?

Let's step back into the shoes of the rational, educated human. "Of course

life exists on other planets," these people say. It would be fatuous to think that we are the only intelligent life forms in existence. They point to such theories as the Drake Equation, which purports to mathematically predict the number of probable civilizations in the universe. These folks always add that visitations to earth by those beings are virtually impossible because of the vast distances they'd have to traverse to reach our backyards. After all, the cosmos is incomprehensibly huge. Although estimated to be approximately 13.8 billion years old, the observable universe is nearly 27 billion light-years across. If that isn't mind-boggling enough, some current astrophysicists and scientists believe that 90 percent of the actual universe lies beyond that. In essence, there is a whole lot of "stuff " in our universe, but the distances are too big to be traversable for humanity, as of now.

The argument that space is too big for us to interact with an alien species seems logical. The distances in our solar system are indeed daunting, making human travel from earth to Mars alone a multiyear, 140-million-mile one-way journey that we have not yet achieved. Are visitors from other planets so advanced that they've cracked the faster-than-light paradigm and are capable of traveling to earth from well outside our solar system?

Or are they, as many theorists think, already here, with a long history of intervening in human affairs while remaining hidden from us, just beyond our reach? In one of his academic papers, eventually published in the *Journal of Cosmology*, Hal enumerated all the possibilities for these beings. The paper is called "Ultraterrestrial Models" and is available online. Hal says, "There is an unidentified phenomenon interacting with the current human population on Earth. It is currently unknown whether the phenomenon is exclusively extraterrestrial, extradimensional, crypto-terrestrial, demonic/djinn, proto/ancient human, time-travelers, etc., or some combination or mutation of any or all of these. However, it appears highly likely that the phenomenon *per se* is not constituted exclusively of members of the current human population."

It was clear that other nations have asked themselves many of the same questions about the origins of space visitors. We know this because of foreign intelligence that has filtered back to us. A contact showed me a small Russian booklet of maps that pinpointed the location of two crashes along the Ural Mountains. There was also the occasional Intelligence Information Report (IIR) that would detail what the former Soviet Union was doing to pursue the topic of UAP. Such reports often mentioned incidents all over Europe,

Turkey, Ukraine, and China. We even had old reports from Marines stationed at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, who described strange lights descending along the "no man's land" between the US and Cuban military zones.

One of our allies, Italy, has logged 15,000 UAP events since 1901. And while the activity appears to have increased dramatically beginning in the twentieth century, it's clear that these objects have been around since long before that. Institutions like the Vatican have formed alliances with UAP transparency advocates in Italy and the US and confidentially share historic accounts that are centuries old that may be UAP-related. Most people would be shocked by the amount of intelligence the Vatican has collected over the millennia, culled from eyewitness reports and perhaps even anecdotes shared in the confessional. Confessions are sacrosanct in Catholicism, but I've been told that the church routinely polled priests to speak in a general way about what troubled their parishioners. In this way, it's conceivable that a cluster of sightings in the Middle Ages would have been noticed and recorded. Is it possible that some historic "miracles" witnessed by the masses were related somehow to UAP?

Historically, religious institutions have been apprehensive to publicly discuss the topic of UAP and have locked these stories down. UAP don't exactly comport to the notion of man and his preeminence on this planet. For example, it's difficult to say, "God created man in His own image," when we are forced to inquire whether humans really look like God, or if God has a favorite intelligent species among all others in His Creation. Neither governments nor religions want their followers questioning their faith or authority.

But as I would find out later, Catholicism and now even Islam are beginning to prepare the public for the long-understood idea that humankind is not alone.

Even before I'd come aboard, Hal conceived and commissioned fascinating studies for AAWSAP/AATIP, including invisibility cloaking, traversable wormholes and stargates, antigravity, brain/machine interfaces, and warp drives. These studies would later be known as the thirty-eight Defense Intelligence Research Documents (DIRDs). Each commissioned study was from a top scientist who was an expert on technology concepts that might apply to the UAP problem. Hal cleverly made sure these studies could be applied to any conceivable weapon system, not just UAP. This was another layer of protection, to hide the true mission of the overall effort.

Later, I would do the same thing in order to keep AATIP viable.

The last time Hal had made this much progress on a program was during his time managing the CIA's Stargate program. And yet, as valuable and accurate as its efforts were, the psychic program was eventually defunded and shut down. Some say the budget was the issue, but most knew the truth. They killed the program because it was *too effective*. That said, I wouldn't assume that means elements of the government have not continued using remote viewing as a tool.

Religious fundamentalists within the chain of command and Capitol Hill began asking pointed questions about the program and its efficacy: more specifically, are these unusual methods paranormal or even demonic? General Albert Stubblebine, who headed up the psychic program—and was nicknamed "General Spoon Bender"—once tangled with a lawmaker, saying, "Why do you care how my collectors gather intelligence, as long as it is accurate?"

Theoretically, Jim Lacatski and his team ran the US's official program on UAP, but at the same time the Legacy Program was working at cross-purposes to ours.

In the parlance of the Pentagon, some deeply hidden black programs were so black that . . . well, they weren't even black, they were ultrablack. We spoke of "purple novas"—projects and programs so secret that not even the secretary of defense or the president would ever know of them, unless they stumbled across them by accident. Remembering what Hal told me earlier, why brief someone who is only in office for a short period of time? Why jeopardize security? That was the mindset of those in the Legacy Program.

Nothing is more black than the Legacy Program.

Whatever the color of these programs, their discoveries would never be shared with other agencies, field activities, and branches. The information, we liked to say, was stuffed up different stovepipes, controlled by unseen barons, each with their own fiefdoms.

Initially, the AAWSAP/AATIP crew enjoyed a good degree of support from DIA leadership. Memorandums to and from Lieutenant General Michael Maples and Deputy Director Robert Cardillo initially referred to the effort in positive terms. I had the privilege to read some of the feedback from these reports myself. As Jim Lacatski and his contractors circulated executive summaries, the email responses they received via secure internal servers were unfailingly positive. It was not unusual to find a hand-scribbled note, at the

top of a classified memo, that read, “Excited to see the results.”

I’ll provide more details on this later, but as time passed, it became increasingly evident to me that the tides were shifting. An increasing number of AAWSAP detractors now worked at the senior level within DIA. More and more scrutiny was being placed on AAWSAP every day and new executive leadership at DIA was getting settled into their roles. Within a matter of weeks of the transition, Lacatski began spending most of his time defending his efforts instead of conducting research. The powers that be in the ivory tower now actively tried to kill the program. If the slightest glimmer of the truth of Jim’s work got released in a broader report destined for the eyes of others in power, it got kicked upstairs, where DIA’s bureaucrats killed it, filed it away, or ignored it.

I understood that instinct, especially from a bureaucratic perspective. AAWSAP’s investigation at the Utah ranch alone aroused curiosity and uncomfortable questions. My impression was that the philosophical and theological challenges were more of a roadblock than the pragmatic or bureaucratic ones, especially now that leaders of a religious bent had taken a keen interest in AAWSAP. To some degree, I understood their apprehension; the topic is frightening, and not because of religious reasons alone.

In 2010, a man I’ll call Devon Woods, who previously served as a senior leader at ODNI, became a senior director at DIA. I knew him from my days at ODNI, and I looked up to him. I perceived him as noble and honest, albeit extremely religious.

This all began when General James Clapper, my old boss at the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence (OUSD(I)), was asked by President Barack Obama to become the new DNI. Clapper and Woods didn’t always see eye to eye, but when Clapper made the move to become the DNI, he offered Woods the job at DIA regardless.

As some very bright political science scholars have recently observed, world governments are spectacularly ill-equipped to manage knowledge that threatens the notion of human supremacy, divine authority, and dominion over this planet. Since the dawn of time, nations have perpetuated the idea of individual sovereignty. Russia is Russia, China is China, and the US is the US. Likewise, national identity and allegiance is a result of national sovereignty. You are Canadian. They are French. I am American. That’s how the world perceives itself. Tribalism on a global scale. Leaders of these national-level organizations, institutions, and bodies have no interest in

encouraging a different truth: We are *all* God-fearing, we *all* pay taxes, we *all* love our children, we are *all* in control of our destinies. We are all one.

AAWSAP/AATIP went from being the ballroom darling to the Wicked Witch of the West, almost overnight.

I wondered privately: What would happen if world governments shared what they really knew about UAP? What if humans bravely chose to confront the possibility that we are not the apex species in our solar system or even on this planet, as we've long been told and believed?

After all I'd learned, total government transparency on the topic of UAP seemed like a pipe dream. To pull it off, you'd have to figure out a way to smash the existing government fiefdoms to bits, while not threatening the institutional status quo, while not breaking any laws, while informing our government leaders and decision makers of the problem, while not running afoul of religious and theological belief systems. And that's the easy part.

One must also unify and rally international allies, allay public fears and insecurities, challenge scientific and academic communities, and have a robust public outreach campaign—all at the same time. To accomplish this would require a herculean effort, not unlike a World War II military campaign. The level of coordination required would be all-encompassing and almost an impossibility.

As the new kid, I was certainly not going to tell Jim how to do his job, but I worried the powers that be had bull's-eyes fixed on Jim and AAWSAP/AATIP.

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1 His other credentials included the Associate Director of Central Intelligence for Military Support at the Central Intelligence Agency; Vice Director of Intelligence for the Joint Staff; and Director of Intelligence for the United States Atlantic Command. Later Wilson became the 13th Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

CHAPTER 5

WRITING ON THE WALL

When Lonnie Zamora peered into that arroyo in Socorro, New Mexico, back in 1964, he saw an egg-shaped object with some sort of markings or insignia on its side. He was strictly warned by the Air Force not to share that knowledge with civilians, and he kept his word. Similarly, numerous witnesses associated with the 1947 Roswell crashes told government officials they saw hieroglyphics on various pieces of the debris, but they were told not to discuss this publicly. Witnesses of the UAP encounter at Rendlesham Forest in 1980 also saw similar symbols on the craft. There are many other examples like these.

Whether it be French cave paintings, Sumerian cuneiform, Egyptian hieroglyphics, or old Hebrew in the Dead Sea Scrolls, writing is a universal way for humans to communicate with each other. Does this logic apply to UAP? Did we learn this at some point from the non-humans who control UAP? Do the mysterious markings on crashed UAP broadcast some sort of profound universal message? Or are those messages far more practical? Are they just simple safety warnings like “Danger. Don’t touch.”?

Studying ancient writing systems swiftly morphed into studying past religions, cultures, and credible artifacts. Not only was the rabbit hole deep, but it was also very slippery.

The ancient Hebrew text called the Book of Enoch caught my attention. The book is not found in the Bible most Christians use today; it’s considered apocryphal. It predates the Gospels, but it was so important in its day that its premise would have been known to Jesus and many of his disciples. It’s the first Hebrew text in which a man, Enoch, journeys to Heaven, encounters God, and learns about the hierarchy of angels. Arguably, it’s a theoretical precursor to Christ’s resurrection and ascension to Heaven.

Enoch’s journey is filled with heavenly accounts, including descriptions

of angelic and demonic hierarchy, God's throne, God's inner circle of guards, and even the language of the supernatural. On paper, Enoch's travels don't sound that dissimilar to reported nonhuman encounters. We also looked at the sixth chapter of Genesis. That's the chapter that contains the story of Noah's ark. Before we get to Noah, verses 1 through 4 of that chapter quickly share that otherworldly beings came to earth and mated with human women. Some translations call these offspring *giants*, while others refer to the visitors by the original Hebrew word, *Nephilim*, which some scholars say means something like *fallen* angels, or beings that cause *others* to fall.

If Genesis 6 were a movie, the Book of Enoch would be its prequel. (Enoch is said to be Noah's grandfather.) In the book, the Nephilim discuss their plan to take earthly women as their wives. The Book of Enoch also refers to these heavenly beings as *Watchers*. Two hundred Watchers travel to earth to enact this plan.

Nephilim . . . Watchers . . . angels . . . aliens.

To be clear, I'm not advocating the ancient astronaut hypothesis that many today believe. I'm simply drawing some interesting parallels. The Bible as commonly read today offers us details of Ezekiel's Wheel and Jacob's Ladder. Are these stories merely instructive, or are they feeble attempts by humans to reconcile their bewilderment over seeing otherworldly technology?

In Western Australia there are 4,000-year-old aboriginal rock paintings that depict the Wandjina, spirit beings with big white heads, large eyes, and little or no mouths. In Peru there is a strange 1,300-year-old image of a Mayan king ensconced in what looks like a spaceship. In Cherokee folklore there is a myth about how glowing people descended to earth, stayed a short time among the Cherokee, then ascended to become the stars in the sky. These stories are separated by centuries and continents, yet are undeniably similar. Are these solely works of human imagination, or is there more to these stories?

This line of thought raises an interesting point about human psychology. When we are confronted with the unknown, humans invariably look to religion to explain the unexplainable. As a species, we have a hard time accepting things we don't understand as real.

During World War II, American bombers and cargo transport planes sometimes landed on Polynesian islands and encountered people who were not connected to the so-called modern world. Pilots shared a little of their

cargo with the locals, rested up, then departed for their intended destinations. Anthropologists later discovered that in the pilots' absence, these people built wooden effigies of those aircraft, and conducted rituals designed to coax the planes to return again with their bounty of cargo. The encounters these Polynesian people had with unusual technology inspired beliefs. This is referred to as a cargo cult.

Imagine building a model of a giant supermarket delivery truck and praying to it every day so that it will return with a bounty of food again and again. Are these people "wrong" for doing this? Especially if, in their minds, their practices deliver results?

As humans, we often assimilate what *is not* known into what *is* known, in order for things to make sense to us. Religion, myths, stories . . . these are things many of us accept. As a spiritual person myself, I understand this, and by no means am I denigrating any religion or belief system.

Now, one could easily argue that this course of research was not related to national security. Moreover, some people would start to feel uncomfortable digging into this kind of material, the moment it touched upon religion, but we needed to understand the past to see if it provided valuable clues. My religious background growing up was fluid enough to keep me open-minded. By attending both a Jewish temple and school and, at the same time, a Catholic church, I grew up immersed in both faiths, celebrating both Hanukkah and Christmas, until I grew older.

In the world of academia, if you were truly going to investigate a mystery of this magnitude, you would assemble a cutting-edge team of researchers who were experts in the relevant fields. You'd have a cryptographer to study the codes. You'd have linguists who specialize in languages and writing systems. You'd have scholars who specialize in religion and mythology. And you'd have a solid budget to get the work done in a reasonable way. As these experts brought their brainpower to bear on the problem, they would write up their research and publish it in academic journals, for the whole world to see. That's how science is done in the real world. It's completely transparent, which is the best way to get ideas flowing.

But that was never going to happen with our government investigation. For the sake of national security, we would rarely get permission to farm out this kind of work to outsiders. We didn't have the budget for that anyway.

One day I arrived at our group office to find Jim and a couple of the others kicking around ideas for a chart Jim had conceived. At the top he'd

typed the word *God*. At the bottom was *Humans*. In the middle was *Angels*.

That's where the conversation became mired. If we went down this avenue as a possibility, one had to ask certain hypothetical questions. Did angels belong halfway between humans and God? In the Bible you have humans seeing, speaking with, and hearing the words of angels. An angel visits Mary to tell her that she will give birth to the infant Jesus. In the famous story of Abraham and Isaac, the angel verbally halts the elder from sacrificing his son.

Jim theorized that if the distance between humans and angels is large, was it not probable that other beings existed between the purely spiritual angels and the flesh-and-soul creatures known as humans? Was it possible an entire ecosystem of divine and semidivine life forms existed in an invisible ecosystem?

Our job was challenging enough without having to grapple with theological questions. Jay clearly felt the same. We had a hard enough time talking to officials about UAP; how could we possibly speak about this other element without provoking powers that be to shut us down? I shook my head as if snapping out of a daydream. "God's Angels and Aliens?" I joked.

Jay laughed and agreed, but Jim wanted to pursue this line of thought, regardless of the risk. I don't think he necessarily subscribed to it, but as a true scientist, he was exploring all avenues, no matter where they might lead.

Jim felt you could not intelligently pursue some of the questions raised without going deep into every idea that we tripped upon. I didn't blame him, especially since I had been learning firsthand about disturbing and surprising matters related to UAP, from implants to biological effects, and Jay's other work that I would soon learn about.

CHAPTER 6

ORBS

One of the most common types of UAP that are often reported is what we call orbs, which are small, luminous balls of light or, in some cases, smooth and metallic spheres. This is nothing new. In World War II, orbs were reported regularly in and around Allied and Axis aircraft, so much so that they were nicknamed “foo fighters.” (Not to be confused with the talented band led by Dave Grohl, which made their mark on history much later.) But even before that, Indigenous people here in the United States have reported orbs going back centuries. In fact, in the Ohio River Valley, they reported orbs, luminous balls, coming out of the river.

I was shocked by the frequency of how often these orbs have been reported, whether by commercial pilots or military pilots or by eye-witnesses on the ground, particularly around military test ranges and sensitive US military facilities.

This is not just a military phenomenon. Now, with the pervasiveness of home security systems and advancements in cell phone cameras, private civilians are capturing these orbs, just like the military is.

The classification of these orbs really varies quite a bit. There are different colors and sizes; some of the colors reported were white, yellow, blue, red, and green. Reports I have seen suggested the blue orbs in particular had a very negative biological consequence, meaning if you got close to one of these, you could expect to be injured. Now, whether that was deliberate or just simply a by-product of the nature of the orb, we really don’t know. Either way, I thought back to what General Uchôa told us about colored orbs injuring civilians. Were these the same type of orbs that terrorized individuals at Colares?

I never had any interaction with orbs until I started working with the program.

I was shocked to find that a lot of my colleagues and I began experiencing firsthand some of these orbs at our homes. In fact, my wife was a complete skeptic on all this—that is, until she saw an orb in our house for herself.

We had a long main hallway in the house, and one evening a green, glowing ball, probably about the size of a basketball, with soft edges that weren't defined, floated down slowly from the kitchen to our bedroom door just below ceiling height, then disappeared into a wall. Hoping Jenn caught a glimpse of it, I turned to her, catching the perplexed look on her face. She indeed saw it the entire ten seconds it was in our house.

Another time, the kids reported seeing an orb appear in the air, hover near them for a few seconds, and then float away. They described what they'd seen as best they could, first to my wife, and again to me when I asked. Their description made my blood run cold. The object had been three-dimensional but still translucent and suffused with an eerie green light. The object behaved as if guided by some intelligence. It parked itself in the air, then drifted off down the hall before disappearing entirely.

What the hell was going on?

Were these things probes sent to scope out my house? Was this some sort of adversarial technology being used to conduct surveillance against my family and me? Or worse, was this all part of the UAP issue? Maybe another, more advanced intelligence was looking into me and my colleagues because they knew we were looking into them? Or did it all presage something more sinister?

After the pilot Kenneth Arnold's famous 1947 UAP sighting, which was a couple of weeks before the Roswell crashes, he and his family allegedly had balls of light in their home.

You'll recall that the citizens terrorized in Colares, Brazil, in the 1970s often claimed to have been pursued and attacked by lights or orbs. Will Livingston, the team's medical consultant, had also studied a case of blue orbs that passed through a woman's body, causing her to become ill. At Skinwalker Ranch, two dogs owned by a rancher chased a blue orb into the field, only to vanish in a *yipe*, leaving behind nothing but two grease spots on the sagebrush that contained remnants of the two dogs' biology—body fluid, blood, and small amounts of tissue—literally all that was left of the poor creatures. To researchers it looked as if the orbs had somehow vaporized the dogs, scorching nearby vegetation. A beam of directed energy, from a powerful laser or radioactive weapon, was the presumed cause.

Two colleagues in particular were under medical care for both cutaneous and visceral injuries that were sustained from interactions with UAP while working with AAWSAP/AATIP, and we had numerous reports of negative biological effects associated with UAP encounters, especially orbs. The injuries sustained seemed to stem from some sort of directed-energy exposure, almost like radiation.

Unfortunately, multiple members of our team (excluding myself) experienced severe biological effects resulting in life-threatening medical issues. These biological effects also extended to their family members, including their children. While I am not able to go into details here, I learned of military servicemen and intelligence officers who succumbed to their injuries and lost their lives due to the biological effects of UAP encounters. And I learned of military and intelligence officials who were struggling to survive as a result of biological effects traced to their UAP encounters.

Another colleague and good friend, who wasn't part of AAWSAP/AATIP but worked around us often, experienced these symptoms. He was the epitome of an Army officer and senior counterterrorism operator. He is a true American hero. I did not know until much later that he had his own UAP encounter as a boy. He went on to learn about some shocking things that happened in his own childhood, tied to his encounter, things he had no memory of.

Over time, more orbs appeared in our home. Not too frequently: a whole month might go by, and then one would arrive. Since "our" orbs manifested as clear or green, I did not feel compelled to warn my family to avoid them. I didn't want to frighten them further. As far as I knew, only blue was problematic.

Nevertheless, we couldn't shake the things. I'd be sitting at the dining room table, working at my computer or catching up on some reading, and I'd suddenly notice one of these damn balls hovering nearby. Other times, we'd be outside, grilling or hanging out near our koi pond with neighbors, when an orb would appear randomly, linger for a few moments, then mosey over toward the trees on the edges of our property. Our neighbors witnessed this too. It got to the point where neighbors would sometimes joke, "Is this one of our government's secret programs you are working on, Lue?" Laughing uncomfortably, I'd think to myself, You have no idea how close to the truth you are.

Like the rest of the family, I had tried to ignore the visitations, hoping that

they would stop. But they didn't. During times of high atmospheric energy, such as storms, the occurrences became more pronounced. There are people who would conclude this was somehow connected to lightning, but it wasn't. Nor were there any high-voltage power lines anywhere in the vicinity.

After months of this strangeness, Jenn finally confronted me when we were alone. "What are you working on at work?" she asked.

I gave the response I'd given a thousand times before: "What do you mean?"

She looked at me over the rim of her reading glasses. I knew I was in trouble. "*I mean*, did you bring anything home with you that you shouldn't have?"

Unfortunately, I also couldn't openly discuss with Jenn or the girls everything I knew. Sometimes the answer would be classified, or just too crazy. Most people know, as does my wife, that intelligence officers are strictly prohibited from sharing the details of their work with spouses, friends, and family members. We sign a pledge that we will keep classified information secret until we are released from that pledge. We are also subject to routine polygraph examinations, drug tests, and psychological evaluations. Frankly, these injunctions are some of the stresses of the job. You are always isolated from the ones you love. For better or worse, your coworkers become your second family. Pillow talkers need not apply.

So I hemmed and hawed. I told her yes, my colleagues *were* investigating some strange things at work. My boss, Jim, had warned me that the portfolio was *sticky*, but I'd assumed he was referring to work stress or something equally commonplace. Now I understood that he meant something else.

We're not the only ones having these experiences, I told my wife. Other people on the team are going through this. They've been having it happen longer than us . . .

"What exactly does 'other people going through *this*' mean?" she asked. "What is *this*?"

I explained as best I could, but she was not comforted at all by my explanation.

"What are we supposed to do? Just sit back and enjoy the light show?"

I told her that even John Robert, my longtime friend, was having weird encounters at his house.

"Stoic John?" she said.

"Yes, even stoic John."

I found the whole thing bewildering, a breaching of the wall of logic I'd previously arrogantly erected in my mind. What was happening? How could this be happening to *us*? What was going on was complex, a bona fide conundrum that stumped everyone back at the office. I also wasn't sold on the idea that the UAP activity was benign. Especially not the UAP chasing our combat aircraft and interfering with our nuclear capabilities.

CHAPTER 7

THE TIC TAC

The “Tic Tac” UAP encounter would become one of the most important in recent history and considered a “gold standard,” due to the way the investigation was handled and the fidelity of information collected. Jay Stratton investigated the incident before I joined the team. He had written a detailed AAWSAP/AATIP report on the event, which is how I first learned about it.

Everything that happened that clear day in November 2004 was a perfect storm of intelligence and operations. In essence, we had three separate sensor types all trained on the target. We had multiple radar systems, both airborne and aboard a ship. We had FLIR (forward-looking infrared) images from the targeting pod externally mounted to our fighter jets, and we had eyewitness testimony from trained fighter pilots, who all reported the same thing, at the same time, at the same place. Thirteen years later, the truth of what happened that day would end up on the front page of the *New York Times*, for all the world to see.

Here is a breakdown of that event: Five vessels had begun traveling together in US waters off the coast of San Diego in what is known as a carrier strike group. The purpose of this deployment was to conduct “workups,” or training exercises, prior to the carrier strike group’s deployment to the Arabian Sea. The lead vessel was the USS *Nimitz*, a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. On its most recent training exercises, it had shared the waters with two destroyers, the USS *Higgins* and the USS *Chafee*; a state-of-the-art SPY-1 radar-equipped missile cruiser called the USS *Princeton*; and a nuclear-powered submarine, the USS *Louisville*. At the time the incident took place, the *Nimitz* and the *Princeton* traveled close together. The other vessels were otherwise occupied.

For nearly two weeks leading up to the incident, the radar operators

aboard the *Princeton* had regularly logged UAP activity in the air surrounding the vessels. Over one hundred UAP.

They performed acrobatics that would challenge any aircraft the radar operators had ever seen. They even popped up on the radar at 80,000 feet, where you begin to get into space, well above the normal envelope of aircraft, even military aircraft, with only a few notable exceptions, which include the U-2, the Blackbird, and the alleged Aurora. What's more perplexing was that the objects would drop from 80,000 to 50 feet in a fraction of a second, then go right back up. There is no aircraft made by humans that can do that.

The Tic Tac encountered by the *Nimitz* Carrier Strike Group exhibited propulsive performance characteristics that imply a propulsion system power generation/output of 1.1 trillion watts. That is more than 100 times the daily electrical utility power generation in the US. Simply put, that is the power required to do what these things do.

If an aircraft performs such a feat, you'd expect to hear a "crack" or sonic boom as it flies beyond the speed of sound. Operators in the vicinity detected no such boom. There was no acoustic signature, as we tend to say. It was as if the rules of normal physics didn't apply.

The carrier strike group had relied solely on electromagnetic systems to track these things. Until then, no one had gotten eyes on the objects. That was all about to change. On this particular November morning, the radio operators spotted what looked like a f leet of UAP—fourteen of them, to be precise—in the vicinity of a training area designated for military maneuvers. Two US Navy F/A-18 Super Hornets were conducting training exercises when they were asked to go get their eyes on the UAP.

In each US Navy aircraft sits a pilot, known as the "front seater," and a Weapon Systems Officer (WSO), colloquially pronounced "Wizzo," also known as the "back seater."

The senior pilot in the air that day was Commander Dave Fravor, who was considered one of the best Navy pilots. One of a rare breed, Fravor was often one of the few individuals who were known to run toward danger, not away from it. Commander Fravor graduated Top Gun with honors and was now the skipper of the elite Black Aces. His call sign, "Sex," was an inside joke bestowed upon him by his colleagues upon graduating flight school—a rich and deep military tradition. On this particular mission, Fravor's aircraft call sign was FASTEAGLE 01. In his back seat was Commander Jim Slaight, call sign "Clean." An experienced and effective WSO, Slaight was often

known as the “warheads on foreheads” guy, due to the precision with which he dropped his bombs.

Making up the other half of the team was another US Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet piloted by Lieutenant Junior Grade Alex Dietrich, who was more skilled and deadly than her call sign—“New Girl”—suggested. Fresh out of training, Dietrich flew circles around her peers, probably the reason she was handpicked for her assignment with the Black Aces. A few years later, I heard a story that Alex had more confirmed kills in a period of time than the entire US Marine Corps. I never knew if the story was true, but I would not doubt it. Accompanying Dietrich as her WSO was another aviator known by the call sign “Noodle.” Together, New Girl and Noodle made up FASTEAGLE 02.

Fravor and Dietrich were flying their aircraft at approximately 20,000 feet when they both looked down into the sea. It was a gorgeous day, the sea calm. In this one spot in the Pacific, the water churned and roiled. It looked the way the surface of the water would look if a ship or some other vessel had sunk. There were whitecaps floating on the water and a giant patch of bubbles rising from them.

At this moment, all four pilots noticed something even stranger. A bizarre object darted back and forth over the whitecaps, about 50 feet above the water. The object was about 46 feet long—about the length of a semitruck—and shaped like an elongated oval or cigar. The pilots would later recall the object’s gleaming whiteness, as if its exterior were covered with a white, candy-coated shell. That description would later inspire the UAP’s nickname.

More unnerving was the way the Tic Tac performed over the roiling water. It moved unlike anything anyone had ever seen.

As Fravor closed in, the Tic Tac instantly trained itself on Fravor’s fast-approaching aircraft. The Tic Tac gained altitude as if intending to meet Fravor and Slaight somewhere in the middle, but the Tic Tac mirrored Fravor’s maneuver in a way that never permitted him to get any closer.

Top Gun instincts kicking in, Commander Fravor aggressively headed directly for the Tic Tac.

As Fravor and Slaight approached the Tic Tac—“poof”—it disappeared over the horizon in a split second. Never before had Fravor or Slaight encountered anything like this type of performance. Fravor felt his heart leap in his chest. Whatever this technology was, it was faster and more capable than anything we had in our inventory by an order of several magnitudes.

A few moments ticked before the *Princeton* contacted both Hornets.

"You're not gonna believe this, Commander," the operator told Fravor. "Whatever that thing is, it's at your CAP point!"

"What the—" Fravor muttered.

How was such a thing possible? The combat air patrol (CAP) point is a designated point that is preloaded into the aircraft and is used as a meeting point for navigation and exercises. Few people know the location of a CAP point; it is impossible to extract from aircraft systems themselves. Yet the Tic Tac somehow knew the intended meeting point of the two Hornets, though it was sixty miles away. Not only did the Tic Tac have secret information, but it managed to scramble to that location within seconds after leaving Fravor and Slaight in the dust.

Low on fuel, Fravor wisely decided to end the exercise. Both jets zipped back to the carrier.

Upon hearing about this incident, another pilot eagerly offered to go find the Tic Tac. To everyone's surprise, he found it. Seeing it on radar, and then with the naked eye, the pilot attempted to gain a lock on the Tic Tac. Cycling through various modes on his aircraft radar, he found it difficult to obtain one. UAP have been known to jam radar.

Navy fighter pilot Lieutenant Chad Underwood managed to capture some video footage of the UAP, using Advanced Targeting Forward Looking Infrared Radar (ATFLIR or FLIR for short). There is quite a bit of mind-boggling information in that short video clip. First, the UAP defies the pilot's attempt to get a good lock on it. Second, it has no wings, no air intake, no exhaust plume, no cockpit, and no distinguishable control surfaces. Third, it displays no heat or acoustic signature. Fourth, it's flying at hypersonic speeds and able to execute a maneuver almost instantaneously.

The craft's instant disappearance was also alarming. Both Underwood and Fravor/Slaight reported the UAP disappearing over the horizon in an instant. How was that possible?

We simply don't know of any aircraft that can go that fast. Nowhere near it.

An enemy armed with this technology could instantaneously deliver a destructive payload anywhere in the world with complete anonymity and impunity. There is nothing we could do to stop it. So this was *not* an encounter the military should take lightly.

What if this technology was already in the hands of an adversary of ours,

rendering all other aircraft in our arsenal obsolete? Were we playing checkers against an enemy who had already mastered three-dimensional chess?

One afternoon during my early days at AAWSAP/AATIP I took my oldest daughter to lacrosse practice somewhere on Maryland's Eastern Shore, and sat on the bleachers with some of the other parents. To pass the time, I had brought along an unclassified document on the topic of teleportation, commissioned by the US Air Force. The Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) had some of the best scientists working on secret technologies that we wouldn't see for another fifty years. And I was okay with that. This included experiments in quantum teleportation, light-bending technology, and novel forms of propulsion.

In this study, there were about eighty pages of dense mathematics, and it argued that teleporting one object from one place in the universe to another was possible in theory, due to a mind-blowing quirk in physics known as quantum entanglement, which Einstein knew about and called "spooky." The study suggested that photons and electrons had been successfully teleported a short distance. Some observations concluded that the photon arrived at its destination even before departing its original position. Apparently the Chinese were investing heavily in quantum entanglement. Is teleportation possible? Turns out it is; though, up until now it's only been very small subatomic particles. These are crazy times we are living in, and it only gets crazier. What was once considered science fiction is now science fact.

If any of these other parents had known what I was reading, they would have called *me* crazy.

The subjects of teleportation and telepathy—near-instantaneous sharing of mental thought—were on my mind because of our refreshed Tic Tac investigation.

The universal speed limit in our universe is said to be the speed of light, which is approximately 186,000 miles per second. As fast as that may seem, it's woefully slow if you want to achieve interstellar travel. We had long assumed that traveling to earth from another planet at the speed of light would require hundreds, thousands, or even millions of years—unless, that is, these beings are exploiting a loophole in the laws of physics in order to travel between worlds.

As time progressed, my obsession with the Tic Tac led me back to historical encounters. Technically, our job at the time wasn't to necessarily study "cold cases," but it was impossible to ignore them. Each report I read

lingered in the back of my mind, haunting me, teasing me, tormenting me. As a trained special agent in counterintelligence, I was supposed to always consider the improbable. Was this an elaborate US disinformation campaign that was allowed to go on for too long?

But when I dug into the past, it again rewarded me . . .

August 1947: A civilian pilot on the East Coast reported an encounter to USAF Air Command with a cylinder-shaped object, "blunt at both ends."

December 1953: Swedish airplane pilots observed a silver or white "flying lozenge" that left them flabbergasted. It "seemed more to be a robot," the report read.

April 1964: The FBI reported finding a downed craft that was "shaped like a butane tank" and about as long as a telephone pole. The witness—who claimed the object narrowly missed his father's farm-house in Socorro, New Mexico—was "deemed sober and frightened." The so-called butane tank report is from the same week as Lonnie Zamora's sighting of a white, egg-shaped object that blasted off from the desert floor.

Tic Tac–shaped UAP are not new. They are very possibly *old* technology. They—whoever they are—have flown them for sixty or seventy of our human years, at least. Egg-shaped or lozenge-shaped vessels defied physics when we were oh-so-proudly building our second generation of fighter planes.

The more I read, the more convinced I was of the reality in front of our faces.

Back in 2004, very little follow-up had been conducted when the pilots returned to the *Nimitz*. Several of the pilots later told Jay that they had been debriefed by intelligence officers. They saw no evidence of a subsequent investigation. Kicked up the chain of command, their story died.

The senior master of arms on board the USS *Princeton* later told me that during a routine SITREP ("situation report") with senior brass aboard the ship, the captain dismissed the entire incident, saying, "Well, you had your fun with this. Let's get back to work now." By then, many crewmen aboard the *Nimitz* and the *Princeton* had shared the video via the government's classified email system.

Underwood, an otherwise serious and focused pilot, never indulged in flights of fancy. Neither Fravor nor Dietrich had displayed any propensity to exaggerate. Their crews perceived them as the best of the best. Fighter pilots are trained to spot, and know the differences between, an Su-22, a MiG-25,

and other similar-looking fighter jets from twenty miles away. They must then make a split-second decision: Is the object friend or foe? Should we shoot it down or protect it?

Beyond a few questions a NORAD investigator put to Underwood, I was told no other internal agency investigated the encounter.

Think about it: an incident worthy of revectoring fighter aircraft conducting workups, complete with radar hits and camera footage, yet none of the higher-ups appear to give a damn.

As Jay interviewed these witnesses, he encountered instances where people just didn't want to talk. Jay was a shrewd investigator with a poker face. He knew just how to ask the right questions to get the right answers. I couldn't understand the resistance some people had, especially top brass, about an incident that was five years in the past at that point. Even those who had retired and entered civilian life still chose not to go on the record. If they did, they asked Jay not to reveal their identities.

Over decades, military people had learned that UAP are to be explained away or, better yet, ignored. Talking about the subject is a definitive career killer. Historically, the moment a pilot's integrity or judgment is questioned, they are usually grounded and relegated to "flying a desk" the remainder of their career. As a result, recruits learn to deal with UAP without question. You get so good at following orders that you even follow the unspoken ones. If the admiral so much as raises his eyebrows, you shut up and move out smartly.

This stigma created a culture of silence. And those who saw or learned too much were silenced further with nondisclosure agreements and threats. Thankfully, that is all finally changing. But again, I'm getting ahead of myself.

The Tic Tac UAP encounter off the coast of San Diego in November 2004 stands as a groundbreaking moment in the modern history of UAP investigations. The convergence of high-caliber intelligence gathering, from multiple radar systems and FLIR to the unanimous testimony of seasoned fighter pilots, set this incident apart. Spearheaded by Jay Stratton's meticulous examination and later thrust into the limelight by a *New York Times* headline, this episode broke new ground in UAP discussions. It underscored not just the appearance of advanced performance characteristics of the observed object but also the profound implications such technology holds for both national security and our understanding of the physical world.

This case, embedded in the collective memory of the carrier strike group personnel and later the global community, challenged us to reconsider the boundaries of our technological knowledge and the mysteries that remain in our skies.

CHAPTER 8

ANGELS OR DEMONS

It was inevitable that we'd end up on a collision course with powerful leaders in government whose worldviews bumped up against what we were investigating. As long as I'd worked the UAP issue, I'd heard stories of a powerful circle of religious fundamentalists who shaped policy within the Department of Defense. They were referred to as the Collins Elite. I'd heard the name bandied about, but honestly, I never gave their existence much credence. It was like hearing stories about the long-reaching power of the Illuminati. A secret religious society? In the Pentagon? It sounded absurd. Wasn't the day-to-day bureaucracy and existence of the Legacy Program bad enough? To entertain the notion that some generals and their staff of zealots actively promoted a religious agenda, which drove policy, inside of a sacred yet *secular* national security institution was simply a bridge too far.

Yet I learned that the Collins Elite were indeed real. But who were they and what was their agenda?

Were they some sort of formal but secret order within the US government, that had been part of the institution from its beginnings? Perhaps it was a rogue Masonic lodge that had managed to co-opt senior members of our military? It certainly made me think of the idea of the Illuminati.

The more I thought about it, the more paranoid I became and the more conspiratorial it all seemed. I could not have pointed out a member if they passed me in the cafeteria. Later I learned that several of the group's members were former colleagues and even a former supervisor of mine. For now they remained elusive. Their ability to operate in complete anonymity was their strength. They were single-minded Pentagon and intelligence community lifers with the power to shape policy and kill programs simply with a whisper or a nod. Every action they took was motivated by their religious beliefs.

How could this be possible in the United States? Obviously, there should not be a religious-based group in the DoD and IC making decisions based on their theological beliefs.

At the time, I considered myself spiritual, though I did not practice any particular religion. I didn't want my beliefs to interfere with or intrude on my ability to investigate. I had spent much of my career trying to protect civilians and American military personnel at home and abroad from the dangers posed by radical fundamentalists. To find the same sort of rigid mindset shaping policy in the US disheartened me, to say the least.

Harry Reid and his cohort of fellow senators who had supported funding AAWSAP/AATIP appreciated the concept of applying science and intellect to the UAP problem—a completely secular view that I heartily embraced. In all the work I'd done in the service, I followed the facts. To make decisions any other way seemed illogical, short-sighted, and archaic.

On the battlefield, we understood that the AK-47s pointed at us were part of a radical holy war, a jihad. I never took it personally. In the halls of the Pentagon, instead of radical Islam, we had radical Christianity, and instead of an AK-47 pointed at me, it was a briefcase and a pen, which was far more terrifying and personal.

Between the Collins Elite and the Legacy Program, we had two powerful forces that didn't want us doing what we were doing. Both had more resources, and both had differing objectives. One group wanted to kill all efforts to investigate the topic; one wanted to investigate it while keeping the public and us in the dark. Both operated in complete secrecy.

Earlier I mentioned a distinguished leader I'm referring to as Devon Woods, who had assumed a senior role at DIA. I knew him well, and regarded him as smart, calm, cool, and collected. Woods had been my unofficial mentor when I first came to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). He had an illustrious career with the CIA before coming on board ODNI.

One day, while attending a routine briefing on information technology (IT) security practices, a junior-level officer said a few things during the training that I'd characterize as less than professional. She did not know who Woods was, so when he tried to correct her, he was met with a snide and disrespectful retort. Normally this would have resulted in immediate administrative actions against the young officer, but Woods was different. Patient and thoughtful. Rather than tearing into the new officer and

embarrassing her in front of the other officers, Woods collected his thoughts, took a deep breath, and then explained to the young officer the error of her ways in a kind and compassionate way. At no time did he pull rank or assert his authority. He exuded grace and class when he didn't have to. This was the measure of a good leader. I learned over the years that if your supervisor has to tell you they are a leader, they aren't much of a leader at all.

Unfortunately, Woods did not get along with my current boss over at DoD, Lieutenant General James Clapper, who at the time was the undersecretary of defense for intelligence. Clapper had the pedigree of Tiberius—a true warrior and a scholar. I looked up to both Woods and Clapper; both were great men deserving respect and admiration.

I was once in a meeting with Clapper when his assistant walked in. "Sir, you have a call waiting for you," she said.

A man of business, Clapper told his assistant to take a message. "Sir, it's Obama," she said.

Clapper stepped out to take the president's call. When he reentered the room, he said to us, "How do you all feel about me being the next director of national intelligence?"

And just like that, he was. I was happy for my boss. This was a big win for America. Having come from ODNI myself, I realized our vast intelligence infrastructure desperately needed a person of his competence. And there was no one more competent than Jim at the time.

Unfortunately, that meant Woods would likely be forced to retire from ODNI, given the two gentlemen didn't always see eye to eye.

When I next heard that Woods had accepted the position of the deputy director of DIA, I took this to be a consolation prize of sorts. Clapper was generous and professional, as always. Rather than oust an old rival, Clapper recognized Woods's worth, and offered him a key role.

My optimism was short-lived, however. Within thirty to forty-five days of my mentor's reassignment to DIA, the atmosphere at the agency changed with respect to our work. Woods brought in colleagues from the CIA. Suddenly the response to Lacatski's well-crafted reports to higher-ups elicited a shift in tone. As I mentioned earlier, where, only a month before, higher-ups accepted these reports with eager interest, suddenly they asked, "Why are we doing this?"

Jay and I both sensed a vibe that Jim did not. He was probably too much of an optimist to perceive the hyenas and wolves circling him. His career was

on the line. I remember a meeting in the fall of 2009 that Jay and I attended with Jim, in which we openly talked about the wisdom of Jim dropping the investigations AAWSAP had gotten involved with that many considered to be dealing with the paranormal and instead focusing solely on UAP threats. I was convinced that if we produced some solid work under the AATIP banner, there wasn't a person in the Pentagon or Congress who could look away, and it would help Jim's efforts.

We had found plenty of evidence of extremely advanced craft performing in ways we couldn't replicate and entering controlled US airspace at home and abroad without any repercussions. These facts alone warranted additional DoD resources.

Jim refused to lose focus on the overall scope of AAWSAP/AATIP, as he felt it was all interrelated. He felt that if he could show DIA and DoD leadership the results of his efforts, any rational individual would see the value of continuing his anomalous investigations. The only problem: the briefing Jim wanted to share with leadership included words like *archangels*, *angels*, *demons*, and *spiritual realm*. A bridge, or two, too far for most.

I urged Jim to tone down the paranormal verbiage and focus instead on the importance of this work to US national security. Our UAP investigations made us aware of a very real national security threat and that was what I felt we had to focus on if we wanted people to pay attention.

"Lue, it's the truth," Jim said, his voice sounding increasingly frustrated. "What's wrong with telling the truth?"

He had a point. There should never be anything wrong with telling the truth. But in this case, it's *how* you tell the truth that matters. Jim made a few adjustments to the slides, and we moved on. I felt bad for Jim. The program was his baby, and now people were trying to kill it. Jim believed with all his core that research on Skinwalker Ranch was worth pursuing. Privately, I agreed. Unfortunately, the current atmosphere within DIA was now hostile to that work, and if we were going to have any chance of success, we needed to adjust our message.

Sometime after that, in the spring of 2010, Jim confided in me that he was being pressured to stop all efforts. He was about to take a meeting with Deputy Secretary of Defense William J. Lynn, hoping he could talk some sense into the deputy secretary and allay any of DoD's fears or concerns. He felt certain everything would turn out okay.

"He only knows what he is being told by DIA leadership," he said. Jim

looked tired and beaten. The last few months had not been kind to him. Jim was a caring and sensitive man who believed he was doing his patriotic duty. Jay and I admired him for that.

I asked Jim if he wanted me to attend the meeting with Deputy Secretary Lynn as a show of solidarity. I figured he could use a human shield. Jim told me it would be best if he went alone, and so I acquiesced.

Later that afternoon, I ran into Woods in a hallway between meetings. He had come to the Pentagon to receive a briefing on DIA matters not related to our efforts. Unlike my usual interactions with him, Woods didn't smile and looked at me sternly.

As he approached, he put his hands in his pockets and said something in a quiet tone that I'll never forget. "Lue, you know we already know what these things are, right?"

I wasn't sure if Woods was asking a question or making a statement. "I'm sorry, sir," I said. "What are you specifically referring to?"

I sensed his annoyance. Deep in my mind, I secretly hoped Woods knew something I didn't. I hoped Woods would reveal to me that these UAP we hunted were actually some sort of secret US technology, hidden deep within the black budgets of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) or the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL). That would have been a welcome relief.

"Have you read your Bible lately, Lue?" he asked.

"Um . . . sir, I *am* familiar with the Bible," I said.

What a strange thing to ask, I thought.

"Lue, you're opening a can of worms playing with this stuff," Woods said. It was clear to me he was talking about UAP.

I can't imagine the look on my face. But I'm sure Woods could tell I was perplexed.

"It's demonic," he said to me. "There is no reason we should be looking into this. We already know what they are and where they come from. They are deceivers. Demons."

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. This was a senior intelligence official putting his religious beliefs ahead of national security.

It was an intense moment. "I know we go way back, Lue," was the subtext. "I know you probably once looked up to me. I'm a friend. But I don't always have to be."

I was dumbstruck. In a moment, I realized that my mentor—who had

always been the consummate gentleman—could be a stone-faced, ruthless operator. No wonder he did so well over at the CIA. This was a direct warning to me, and I completely understood the message.

Yes, it's natural to fear the unknown, and a healthy amount of fear can prevent someone from making dumb mistakes. But simply put—this seemed crazy, and about a topic that was already insane enough.

The program had taken on a slew of subcontractors to help with the research, but the primary firm was Bigelow Aerospace Advanced Space Studies (BAASS), owned by former hotel magnate Robert Bigelow, who, as I mentioned, at the time owned Skinwalker Ranch. I liked Bob and admired his tenacity and patriotism. He spent much of his own money fronting some of the costs for AAWSAP. Unfortunately, that was part of the problem, according to DoD. In an effort to "do the right thing," detractors at DoD said the wrong things were done.

In addition, to accelerate its UAP work, AAWSAP gained access to a database of civilian eyewitness accounts, intending to track down the eyewitnesses and debrief them about sightings and aircraft encounters. The names and contact information of those US citizens had allegedly been stripped out before anything went to the government, but the redacted reports had allegedly been uploaded to DoD databases, not by BAASS but by someone in AAWSAP's government chain of command. If true, this act alone is a serious violation of multiple DoD regulations and possibly Executive Order 12333. This may seem like a simple oversight, but it was all the ammunition the detractors needed to create a false impression that AAWSAP had gone rogue.

Despite all the new controversy, Bob still handled himself professionally and was motivated as a patriot to always do the right thing. AAWSAP and BAASS were no different, from my observations.

In the past, DoD and her sometimes naughty children—US Army Counterintelligence (CI), the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI), and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS)—had violated civil liberties. From spying on student unions in the 1960s to penetrating demonstrations and targeting the American Civil Liberties Union, the DoD deservedly got smacked by Congress for unethical actions. As a result, laws were created to prevent DoD's massive might from being misused.

According to its detractors, AAWSAP had become an oversight nightmare from a legal and administrative perspective. Let me be clear: the

nightmare was largely manufactured by the enemies of AAWSAP at DIA but was certainly effective. Personally, I never understood the need to go down the civilian experiencer route in the first place. Private research organizations already did that and did it well. We worked for the Pentagon. It was safer to confine ourselves solely to military and intelligence encounters with UAP. It was hard enough to speak to politicians and intelligence officials about UAP. I can't fault those who thought they were saving our government time and money by acquiring that data, especially if those individuals were not trained intelligence officers or did not know the legal boundaries of collecting and using certain information. I chalked it up to an honest administrative mistake while trying to do the right thing.

Still, Jay and I didn't like what DoD was doing to Jim. I respected Jim's abilities, his scientific instincts, and his willingness to apply intellect to cosmic questions. He had dared to ask questions others were too timid or too ignorant to ask. The thought of the institution attacking him offended me. Further, the fact that no one later acknowledged the contributions of Jim or of Bob and his team of contractors was simply wrong. Many of these individuals were top scientists themselves or had extensive military and law enforcement training. Rather than being criticized for their efforts, they should have been lauded for their courage and tenacity.

I had recently accepted a new position as Director of National Programs, Special Management Staff, nestled within the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). The program managed national-level special-access programs directly for the National Security Council and the White House. Specifically, I worked largely on the US government's efforts at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba. Now that I had broader authorities than before, Jay, John Robert, and I decided to move the remnants of the effort away from DIA and house it within my portfolio of national programs, ensuring the prying eyes of our detractors would no longer have any visibility. At the same time, Jay, myself, and a handful of government civilians and contractors would continue to run AATIP under the proverbial radar. If I did it this way, I knew no one in DoD would have access to the program, unless I specifically allowed it.

If we were clever, I could "dual-use" my existing funding to investigate UAP. That means that if I sent out a FLIR video to be analyzed, I could use the same budget line to analyze whether the object in the video was a Russian MiG-25 aircraft—or a UAP.

The only contractors who would remain involved with Jay and me were Hal, Will Livingston, and Eric Davis. They each had legendary careers operating behind the scenes on our nation's most classified programs. Over the previous decades, they explored some of humanity's greatest mysteries for our government. They knew information that less than 0.01 percent of the human population knew.

I am sure our decision was unpopular with many who were part of the original AAWSAP, but it was the only way Jay and I could figure out a way for AATIP to survive the constant barrage of internal attacks. Hal, Will, and Eric would have unparalleled access to help Jay, John, me, and the others. In classic Pentagon style, everyone would fit their AATIP work into their already packed government workloads, and we would have to be very clever with the funding.

Hoping to help Jim Lacatski defend himself against the bureaucratic onslaught at DIA, I contacted a friend and former boss of mine, Michael Higgins. I had always considered Michael Higgins an honorable man. He was old-school. After leaving the US Marine Corps, he became an elite trigger puller for one of the three-letter intelligence agencies. He wasn't a DC debutante or a member of the Junior League. He was a street fighter with the savvy of the Cheshire cat. Not a man to be trifled with, but a man I trusted implicitly. As it so happened, he had recently taken over as the DIA's new Director of Operations.

I called Michael from a secure telephone. "Michael, I need you to protect one of our scientists. He is a good man who has done great things for our country, and your agency is trying to persecute him. I need to call in a favor and make sure he is protected from internal DIA forces."

Michael simply replied, "You got it, Lue. I will look into it."

I don't think Jim ever knew what I tried to do for him, and I never told him. I suspect Jim would never have agreed for me to call on his behalf because he was always a patriot and would never call on favors to save himself. That was the kind of man Jim was.

Jay and I had done the best we could for Jim. Now I needed to see what I could do for the remains of his programs. We knew that the original money Senator Reid and his cohorts had secured for the program had run out. The original funding was programmed for the years 2008–12. Reid thought he could come up with another fresh infusion of funding to tide our investigations over until 2013–14.

At the time, the hot buzzword in Congress, the Pentagon, and the IC was ISR, which stood for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. At the same time, our enemies on the battlefield had become pretty adept at what we called the "counter-ISR" mission. They actively weaponized their own drones and aerial platforms, ensuring that never-ending game of cat and mouse continued apace.

At the height of the Global War on Terror, politicians fell over themselves writing checks for anything under the rubric of ISR. It wasn't a stretch to consider AATIP as part of the ISR mission.

After all, AATIP tracked and studied UAP with advanced capabilities that had shown an unusual interest in our military and our most sensitive sites. Whoever or whatever was controlling the UAP was clearly doing some form of ISR. Jay and I strategized on how the new appropriations language should look. To get around the stigma surrounding UAP, Jay drafted some language that would serve as an appropriations request, and it was so brilliantly worded that no one who wasn't privy to our investigation would ever guess we were focused on the issue of ISR by UAP.

I remember a conversation about funding that I had with my new boss, Neill Tipton, who was assigned to run the Intelligence Sharing and Foreign Intelligence Relationship Office. Neill had served in the Army, and later worked sensitive programs for several of the three-letter agencies. He was a good man and a passionate deep-sea fisherman who in his work life found himself swimming in a pool of sharks. As a Defense Intelligence Senior Level (DISL), he lacked the teeth brandished by his colleagues who were full-fledged members of the Senior Executive Service (SES), the highest civilian rank one could attain in the government. This meant Tipton would need to play the political game within the building if he ever wanted to see SES.

"Neill," I said one day when I visited him at his office in Arlington, "by now you probably already know that I am involved with another . . . *nuanced* project."

"I know," he said. "I see a lot of strange people you bring here once in a while. I don't like to ask questions."

"I appreciate that, but I am here to ask you for some help. I need to know if you are still working with those guys across the hall."

"Of course I am," he said. "I helped build the program. Why wouldn't I be?"

“Well, it looks like I may be getting some funding for one of my programs, and I need to make sure I don’t step on anyone’s toes or take away from anything you have going on.”

Neill looked at me a bit confused. “Are you working an ISR project?” he asked.

That was the question, wasn’t it? Deep down, I knew that we could justify studying UAP if asked, because the questions we ask when studying, say, the signatures of a North Korean intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) could easily be the same as those regarding the study of a UAP.

Sheepishly, I responded, “Um, kiiiind of . . . but not really.”

Neill hesitated for a moment, assessing my body language. “Sure, Lue, whatever you need,” he said finally. As I was heading out, he blurted, “Just don’t get me into trouble.”

I worked for Neill before, but this was the beginning of a longer, more interesting professional relationship with Neill. In the coming months and years, I would have occasion to share some unusual videos with him, to get his insights into potential UAP technologies.

Long story short, Jay ran point on pulling off miracle after miracle and succeeded in getting Senator Reid to give us new funding—$10 million! We rejoiced for all of ten minutes, until we learned that another DoD program had absconded the funds. Jay and I felt kicked in the teeth. This happened because the language on the funding bill was ambiguous enough for someone in a powerful position to justify kicking the money to another line item.

To make matters worse, the world’s biggest catch-22 hung over our heads. We knew who had taken the money, and how he expected to use the funds. We just couldn’t openly fight for our money. If we did, we would expose the program. If we didn’t fight for the money, we would have no other funding source.

Neill Tipton urged me to speak to *his* boss, John Pede, who was no stranger to black budgets. When I bumped into Pede in the hallway and explained the situation, he said, “Damn, Lue, wish I had known earlier. I know the money you’re asking about; it’s being used to pay for some academic studies. Had I known earlier, I could have helped.”

He was right. We had kept our “bigoted” list of AATIP’s members and allies small. We were afraid to make some people aware of the effort. I guess we might have been overly protective of the topic, so protective that we lost the money we needed to continue.

“I wish I could tell you what we need it for, but I am not at liberty to discuss the details at this time,” I told Pede.

He smiled. “Believe it or not, I think I know what you are working on,” he said, winking. Pede always struck me as having a brilliant mind. I suspected maybe he really did know.

Officially, we were on the skids, but we knew we could make it work on a shoestring. I had my own modest budget, and we could probably request other small funding disbursements on a case-by-case basis through a government process called “Overguidance.”

Even with all these budgetary concerns on my mind, I needed to find time for the work itself. Around this time, I spent several hours catching up with Will. Until then, I had not been deeply briefed on what he was doing. The good doctor now took me further into his confidence. Will was always a professional and never provided us with patient details. Will served as a medical advisor to AAWSAP/AATIP and Bigelow’s NIDS.

My former training in microbiology likely made me a bit of a nuisance to Will, kind of like a Cub Scout asking an Army Ranger to be his mentor. But Will was always the gentleman, and if he felt that way, he never let on. My specific interests involved alleged alien implants found in humans. From what I read, often living tissue grew around implants, but such growths never contained anything but the patient’s DNA in them. The growths sometimes sprouted multiple brightly colored hairs or filaments, similar to Morgellons fibers. When researchers scrape away the human tissue, they find objects that resemble a technical device in size and shape but without any circuitry whatsoever. I once handled one of these implants myself, provided to me by a hospital in the Department of Veterans Affairs, where it had been removed from a US military servicemember who had encountered a UAP. The material, no longer or wider than a joint of one of your fingers, looked more like a microchip encapsulated by a slimy semitranslucent casing of tissue. It looked very similar to mother-of-pearl. Under a microscope, it was still moving somehow. The doctor hypothesized that it had its own metabolism. AAWSAP/AATIP had also obtained photographs of these sorts of tiny objects from living foreign military pilots. Some of the specimens that have been removed from individuals were allegedly sent to various medical institutions, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, the National Institutes of Health, and a US Army research facility at Fort Detrick in Maryland, where some of the most deadly

viruses are under lock and key and the watchful eye of armed guards. Although I asked often, Will never commented to me about any involvement he may have had regarding alleged implants, but it didn't stop me from asking whenever I could.

I already knew from other research and interviews that doctors had seen cases where the alleged alien implant evaded extraction by moving subcutaneously when doctors tried to excise it. I heard similar stories when investigating implants removed from otherwise healthy soldiers. Physicians really had to work to pin down and cut out the objects. With my background in microbiology, I was perplexed how highly motile objects such as these could move without creating a devastating path of tissue destruction inside the human body. Where was the white cell response? Where was the destructive immune cascade? I knew from my time studying trypanosomes at the University of Miami that anytime these spirochetes moved about under the skin, they would elicit an enormous immune response. Where was this response with regard to the implants?

Doctors reported detecting the implant moving, but there weren't any obvious signs of pathway destruction. Like a stealth bomber, the implant moved without any trace or signature, almost as if evading the natural human immune response. It was as if the body didn't know the object was there in the first place. Maybe the implant encouraged the growth of human tissue around itself to keep the body from rejecting it. Post-extraction, some implants moved around the petri dish in which they were confined until they ran out of energy. One theory a doctor told me was that they drew their energy from their host's body.

In one particular instance, a senior CIA official and his wife had a terrifying UAP experience in the backyard of their own home. When they awoke lying on the ground in the yard, the CIA officer had a small hole punched in the back of his neck, and his wife had a small metallic object recovered from her nose when she sneezed. Making things even more interesting, CIA doctors were notified of the circumstances and examined the patients.

What was the purpose of these implants? Were they tracking devices? Mind control? Did they collect and transmit data on the host's metabolism? Another researcher reported finding long filaments, again akin to Morgellons fibers, moving under their own power while under the microscope, scaring the researcher to the point that she didn't want to study the samples anymore.

The objects seemed to have their own metabolism.

It was all fascinating, but at the time, Jay and I agreed we had to focus on the nuts and bolts of UAP military encounters in order to effectively navigate future battles with Congress, the DoD, and other agencies.

CHAPTER 9

INTO THE VOID

Thus began a new era for AATIP. My new base of operations was office 3C503A—third floor, C-ring, fifth corridor, alpha suite—in the Pentagon. At 6.5 million square feet, this was the largest office building in the world until recently. Twenty-two thousand people work there, the population of a large university campus.

The US Department of War constructed the building at the beginning of World War II, and it still exudes the shopworn feel of an old government structure. Superbly designed for efficiency, it has eleven corridors arranged like the spokes of a wheel, so you can reach any location on foot in five minutes. The building is so vast that work crews often hop a tram that whisks them to their destination on one of the building's underground highways.

Most civilians have only seen the building's five-sided shape in movies and on TV. I assure you that from the air the Pentagon looks smaller than it is in real life. The central courtyard is so big that you can fit the US Capitol building inside it and still run laps around the building's gleaming white marble and sandstone. A nugget of trivia I always found humorous occurred at the end of the Cold War, when the DoD discovered to their amusement that the Soviets had targeted a minuscule structure in the Pentagon's central plaza as a prime objective in case of nuclear war. Taken while satellite photography was still in its infancy, the image showed an object at the center of the courtyard that for decades the Russians thought was an elevator to a secret underground bunker. It wasn't until the Berlin Wall fell and Russians and Americans were working together that the Russians discovered the truth. The dot in the middle of the satellite imagery was nothing more than a humble hot dog stand.

Given the long hours I would have to work, I was assigned a parking spot along the coveted River Entrance, alongside all the senior military staff, the

chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the secretaries of each service, all of the undersecretaries, and the secretary of defense.

Our lack of funding meant the team had to be lean, mean, and dedicated. Everyone involved *wanted* to be there, willing to accept AATIP's workload in addition to whatever their primary DoD responsibilities were. Jay and I handpicked everyone involved.

During that time, we worked with a number of allies from across the DoD and IC. These folks were the best in the business. Several of them were optical specialists and understood hyperspectral data and signatures. That means imaging technology that captures images in ranges of vision that are beyond the perception of the human eye. Human eyes can only see visible white light. But animals, say, like bees, can see ultraviolet light, which helps them home in on the centers of flowers. Snakes detect infrared, so they can "see" the body heat of their prey in the same way that an ATFLIR camera on an F/A-18 Hornet detects the heat signatures of a combatant aircraft. These forms of intelligence analysis are called Measurement and Signature Intelligence (MASINT) and Imagery Intelligence (IMINT). Understanding this imaging requires a certain skill set.

Sometimes we relied on analysts employed by DoD. In some of these instances we couldn't discuss the target, out of fear that we would compromise the entire effort. In those cases we wouldn't tell the analyst what they were looking at. All they had to do was run their tests and tell us whether we were looking at a drone, a probe, a known aircraft, or an unidentifiable object. On several occasions, analysts would become suspicious. After ruling out a plane, a missile, a drone, a helicopter, a balloon, a kite, it became obvious we were looking at a UAP.

With an uneasy, sheepish smile the analyst often summed up their findings with something like: "It's not one of ours, that's for sure. Hard to believe it's man-made."

Not wanting to confirm their suspicions, "Good job, thank you," was our usual response.

If a recruit seemed promising, I'd monitor their work for about six months before inviting them out. We'd drink coffee downstairs at the Dunkin' Donuts, shoot the breeze, and chat very informally. I wanted to know about the stability of their home life, if they were prone to partying, if they had children, and how they got along with their parents. Stability was paramount for anyone joining AATIP. They couldn't be prone to flights of fancy. I did

not want anyone who was a science fiction buff, or anyone who was obsessed with UAP. I wanted the normal Joe or Jane, of sound mind, and with no baggage at home. If they met my criteria, then back at the office I'd whisk them into a SCIF for the Talk.

"I really appreciate you pitching in these last few months. You'd be surprised how weird this job can get."

"Oh, don't mention it," the analyst would say. "I *know* the Gitmo [Guantanamo] workload is insanely crazy, but I enjoy the mission. I appreciate how weird things can get around here."

"No, I don't think you do," I'd say. "You might be surprised how truly strange it gets around here. How open-minded are you?"

The young man or woman would cock their head. Where was this going? "I think I can be pretty open-minded about the work, sir."

"What if I told you about another program I run?"

"Sir, I know you wear many hats. Strange people come to see you on a regular basis. I see calendar invites from some very senior people. I assume you are a very busy man."

"Well, then half of this conversation is already over," I would joke. "What if I told you that I and some of your colleagues work on studying advanced technologies?"

"Like fifth-generation fighter jets?" was a typical response.

"No, a little more exotic," I would say.

"Oh, like space stuff? I love space stuff!"

"Nooo, a little more exotic than that," I would say. "Well, perhaps *a lot* more exotic than that."

Obviously intrigued, the analyst would say, "What could be more exotic than space stuff? Ohhh, you mean underwater stuff?"

"Well, yes and no. It includes both space stuff and underwater stuff. But not the stuff you think it is."

"Is it Russian?"

"Maybe," I'd say. "Maybe not . . ."

I would wait to see how quickly they connected the dots, and if they would instantly reject what their gut was telling them.

"Sir, are you talking about what I *think* you are talking about? Is . . . is this a joke?"

I kept my voice flat and even. "No, I don't joke about this stuff."

"You mean they are real?"

“That’s *precisely* what I’m saying.”

“Wait a minute. *They* are real? Is that what you are telling me, sir?”

Their faces registered shock, excitement, intrigue. They always had a ton of questions, but it did none of us any good to jump right into the fray. Not yet. That day would come, just as it had come for me the first time I had sat down with Jim Lacatski. There was always time to learn. Hell, *I* was still learning.

“Now,” I’d say, “I suggest you think about this, and see if you want to know more. If you think you’re ready, come back and we can talk again later this week. But if you ever mention this to anyone, I will fire you immediately and publicly deny we ever had this conversation.”

They would amble off to ponder the meaning of my words. A few never took me up on the offer.

They left me to wonder if Neo in the Matrix movies ever had this much trouble swallowing the red pill. For some, the pill seemed to get lodged in the back of their throat, though no amount of water would help. They needed time, and that was one thing we didn’t have much of.

The caseloads were growing. We continued to find ways to learn what military witnesses knew about a particular incident.

“What incident?” they’d often tell us by phone or in person. “I didn’t see anything.”

We launched into a delicate song and dance about how other crew members on their vessel or squadron had reported seeing something unusual. Maybe then they’d budge. Maybe. The stigma was entrenched and strong.

Jay excelled at getting his fellow Navy members to talk. Often when talking to a new source we would say, “Look, I know you saw something. It’s okay. What you need to know right now is that we work for a Special Access Program, and it’s very likely you came across one of our technologies. We do our best to hide these things, but sometimes people who are observant, such as yourself, see one. We would really appreciate it if you could tell us exactly what you saw, so if it *is* one of ours, we can hide it better in the future.”

This strategy worked most of the time. It gave witnesses a way out.

“Oh, well, in that case,” they would say, “I saw this thing darting in and out of a cloud like a paddleball. It moved in ways I can’t even explain. Thank goodness it’s one of *our* technologies. That’s a relief! You guys really need to do a better job hiding it. God forbid the enemy sees it.”

With that, we could usually obtain the information we sought. Jay and I

spoke often about how we could sense these servicemen and -women trying to make that split-second decision—talk or clam up?—on the phone with us. How often we wished we could promise them protection or immunity from reprisals. But we had no such leverage in our toolkit.

The more we worked these cases, however, the more often high-ranking military personnel in the know reached out to us, usually because they were concerned about the safety of the much younger people who reported to them.

One day I showed up at work to find that Jay had shared a stunning video via email. The footage was shot by a naval aviator on a routine mission, through the cockpit camera, as if over the shoulder. The audio begins with typical jabber and call sign lingo. The pilot is trying to get a visual on what the radar is seeing.

"Still no visual," says the voice. "I am right on it, but still no visual."

Another voice over the radio says, "It should be right . . ."

Just then, a wedge-shaped craft zooms by the cockpit as close as fifty feet.

The pilot erupts into several expletives, similar to what you might hear people in the audience of a horror movie utter when a monster or killer leaps out of hiding.

When we slowed down the video frame by frame, it was clear why the pilot was so frazzled. It was not any type of aircraft that we or our enemies have. It was completely alien.

Another UAP video to hit my inbox involved a Predator unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) drone conducting surveillance of a nuclear facility in a particularly hostile country when its camera picked up three luminous objects. Just three dots. Unexplainably, the dots began to fly in a regimented formation. *A perfect triangle*. As the dots approached the Predator, they became more distinguishable. They were not only flying but were solid in structure. For twenty-three minutes, these craft tormented the Predator. They traversed sixty miles in the blink of an eye, traveling to the horizon, only to dart back and shadow the Predator within a few hundred feet. If that were not amazing enough, the three craft would routinely reorient themselves, switching from a wedge formation to a linear formation. As they danced across the sky, they appeared to be toying with our Predator. "See what we can do and you can't?" was the message I felt in my gut. The craft seemed curious about the Predator, often coming in for closer inspection.

Later, I would recall this when Navy fighter pilot Alex Dietrich described

the 2004 Tic Tac as maneuvering in a “playful” manner.

Playful? What a strange description. Yet that was precisely my own impression as I watched this video.

I shared the video with my highest-level industry experts. Aviation experts don’t mince words. This is literally all they do—watch real-life, filmed, or simulated aircraft day after day. They can spot something off-kilter in a flash.

The conversation always went something like this:

Lue: “Are these conventional aircraft?”
Expert: “No. Not a chance.”
Lue: “Well, let’s pretend they are conventional, what could they possibly be? Give me all the options you can think of.”

The expert embarked on a course of mental gymnastics.

Expert: “Well, I suppose if someone had the ability to create a semi-inflatable balloon with a two-way inducted fan in the middle that was shrouded and cooled using superconducting avionics, stealth skin, and paint, I suppose it’s possible. But then you have a power supply issue. No battery can last that long.”
Lue: “Is that what we are seeing here?”
Expert: “No, not a chance.”

Around this time, Hal Puthoff appeared in my office to share a fascinating theory. He had been thinking a lot about how the Roswell crash was believed to have been caused by DoD experiments with electromagnetic pulse (EMP) energy, a by-product of the atomic bomb, at one of the nearby test ranges. Scientists learned early on that one of the by-products of an atomic bomb was the intense emission of neutrons and a nuclear electromagnetic pulse that could be used to fry the circuits of any electronic device by overloading the circuit or system.

EMP energy can be designed to neutralize electronic technology depending upon the altitude and direction in which it’s deployed. With a large enough pulse, this could decimate power grids, shut down motor vehicles, and disrupt communication systems (radios, TVs, telephones). One way an EMP can be delivered is by any nuclear explosion, or by a neutron bomb, a natural evolution of the atomic bomb. EMP is a magic bullet if you wanted to decimate electronic infrastructure, not people. During the early

years of development, the only downside at the time was that you would have to detonate an EMP bomb the same way you did an atomic bomb: by dropping it out of an airplane, then flying away quickly before it crashed your delivery aircraft.

Hal's theory: If the Roswell aircraft were downed with an EMP by accident, this could mean the aircraft had an Achilles' heel. It might mean that their tech then functioned in many ways similar to modern aircraft and motor vehicles in that they may have some sort of circuitry or vulnerability to directed energy sources. We just didn't know what facet of their technology was impacted by EMP. Was it the aircraft's propulsion system? Its avionics, or electronics, systems? Its life-support systems?

Either way, if UAP are still vulnerable to disruption by an EMP, we could, in theory, cause another crash intentionally, to retrieve the craft. But by now they may know that we know this. If we were ever to employ such a weapon against these craft, we worry that it would be seen as an act of war, or provocation. But were the incursions of our most restricted airspace already an act of war? A provocation?

All of these things weighed on my mind. If I were a lawyer arguing a case before a jury, I would have a ton of evidence to present. The witnesses, the videos, the performance characteristics quantified by the analysts and then verified independently by the experts involved with AATIP . . . It all seemed to add up to an unassailable conclusion. Whatever "it" was, the threat was real. We still lacked a motive. What in the hell did it/they want from us?

At the end of one of those days of too many questions and not enough answers, I locked my computer, stored my documents in my GSA security container, spun the electronic dial of the X-08 digital lock, bolted the door of the SCIF, and went home to help take care of my mother.

Mom, who had moved to the neighboring town of St. Michaels, Maryland, to be closer to us, was diagnosed with stage 4 stomach cancer, non-Hodgkin's B-cell lymphoma to be precise. As far as cancers go, this one is a relatively good type, with a high cure rate. Just not in this case, sadly. Inoperable. Many families experience horrific medical dramas, and ours was no different. It was my privilege to love and care for her as the disease slowly took its toll on her to the point where she wasted away to nothing. The cancer consumed every ounce of her being, leaving her a husk now entering the final stages of life. No hair, no teeth, pale, and failing, she was a long way from the glamorous model she once was. And yet, she was perhaps even more

beautiful than ever before. Her inner light shone through the ravages of her cancer.

She and I had always been close and she showered me with affection. She'd been married before she met my father, and I was her third and youngest son. The other two marriages had failed before they even began. Desperate to leave her broken home behind, my mother sought dreams that sometimes became nightmares.

I always found time and a way to call her, if just to say good night and remind her how much she was loved. As a grown man on deployment, I thought nothing of phoning her from whatever far-flung location I was in. Kuwait, Afghanistan, Iraq. It didn't matter. If no telephones were available, I'd find a satellite phone or uplink and electronically tunnel through several exchanges until I finally succeeded in hearing my mother's voice. For all I knew, this would be my last opportunity to say goodbye. Most people who have been in combat would understand. When on deployment, we all want to hear the voices of our loved ones, just one more time, in case we don't make it.

"You okay, Mom?" I'd say. "Cool. I love you, Mom. I gotta go."

Then I'd hang up, grab my weapon, and go.

Janise loved the music of the French chanteuse Edith Piaf, and during her final days I made sure she had a small CD player by her hospital bed so we could play her favorites to lighten the mood. She lingered and lingered, defying the expectations of her doctors. It is excruciating to watch someone you love go through that kind of suffering. I just wanted the pain to end.

My background in premed had prepared me for the final stages of someone's life. As internal organs fail, breathing becomes shallow and irregular. Toward the end, saliva and mucus collect in the back of the throat, triggering a persistent gurgling, the unnerving death rattle.

I visited and sat with her every day. I had seen death and dying people my entire career. I had lost comrades on the battlefield. But this was obviously different. I had spent my entire life dreading this moment. It was personal. Routinely I would ask her, "Are you in any pain?" In her semiconscious state, she would shake her head no. She was too weak to talk.

When her time came, I knew it was upon us. Everyone else in the room sat silently with their own thoughts. As I lay with my head in her hand, I suddenly had an overwhelming feeling that she was about to leave us forever. Jolted out of the silence, I shouted to her boyfriend Ron, "Hit the play

button."

Warm and clear, Piaf 's "La Vie en Rose" filled the room. I was witnessing the end, the conclusion, another human's ultimate finality in this universe, and there was nothing I could do about it. Halfway through the song, I took my mother's frail hand. Her eyes, which had remained closed for weeks, fluttered open. Her bright blue eyes opened wide as if perceiving something the rest of us in the room could not. With a soft, awkward smile, she passed from this life.

From that day, when as a child I learned that my mother would one day die, I promised myself that I would be with her at the end, no matter what. My mother had escorted me into this world, over the threshold into life. I'd be damned if I didn't escort her into the great beyond. That I did.

Another tragedy befell our family months later, in February 2012. I was giving a tour of the Pentagon to a Japanese delegation of VIPs. It wasn't part of my normal job, but being a history buff, I was often asked to give personal tours since I took visitors to areas that are not part of the normal Pentagon tour. I had just taken the delegation through the E-ring, through the hallway of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, when I received a call from an Annapolis, Maryland, telephone number that I did not recognize.

Something wasn't right. I felt a sudden tremor of fear, almost like when my mother was about to pass.

The voice on the line belonged to a paramedic. "Sir, are you the husband of Jennifer Elizondo?"

"Yes," I responded. "Why? Who are you?"

"We are taking your wife to the emergency room. She was hit by a vehicle while crossing a crosswalk."

My heart sank. Nausea overcame me in an instant. I heard crying in the background and immediately recognized Jennifer's voice. "Is she okay?"

"No, sir, she sustained a traumatic brain injury. She was knocked unconscious and thrown several yards down the road. We found her on the street."

A driver had run through a crosswalk and plowed into her along Spa Creek Bridge in Annapolis. Just that morning, I had dropped her off at work because we sometimes commuted together. We had a date night planned that evening. She'd gotten off early and decided to stroll to the restaurant and wait for me. Now she lay in the back of an ambulance and I was an hour and a half away, at the Pentagon.

When I arrived at the hospital, I found Jenn with her doctors. My buddy John Robert and a couple of other friends had come too. When Jenn was released later that night under the condition of strict supervision, I drove her home to find our daughters waiting. They grabbed Jenn and began weeping in each other's arms.

I could barely keep it together. The tears just kept coming. I couldn't help but think of the time I had nearly lost her and Alex during our daughter's complicated, premature birth in 2001. We had dodged a bullet back then, and I had hoped never to experience pain like that again. Three months after mother and daughter were released from the hospital, the twin towers fell on 9/11; two months later, I got the orders to saddle up for a mission to a secret location in Uzbekistan called Kashi Kannibad, otherwise known as "K-2." I knew then I was on my way to Afghanistan. I left my young family behind and went off in service to our country. Jennifer was still recovering; Alex weighed only five pounds; Taylor had turned four. Duty called.

Now, years later, as we huddled on the floor of the living room, I thought of how I had spent too many years away, missing birthdays, Christmases, school plays, field hockey tournaments, science fairs, and bring-your-dad-to-school days. Moments I wished I had been a part of.

I didn't want to ever be separated from them again. I closely quizzed Jenn about her injuries. Outwardly she was fine, except for the bloody mess all over her head and hair. The hospital had treated her obvious injuries and run some tests. Severe concussion was the initial diagnosis. But her far-ranging medical issues lay under the surface, just waiting to make themselves known. What happened that day would impact our lives for years after.

CHAPTER 10

THE SECRET IN THEIR BRAINS

One particular Saturday I strolled into the local tattoo shop in Denton, Maryland. Mike at Black Anchor Tattoo had always done my work. He was a traditionalist whose specialty was old-school Americana. The same types of tattoos Popeye the Sailor would have if he were a real live sailor. Mike was a gruff, bearded guy but was also a devout family man. He enjoyed teasing me about my leathery, beat-up skin.

I showed Mike a small design on paper. “Can you replicate that?” I said.

After several years of inking me, Mike and I had a bond. He knew my profession. “Seems official,” he said, asking without asking.

“Yeah, it is,” I said. “Think you can you do it?”

Several members of AATIP had emblazoned meaningful images on their bodies that connected in some way to AATIP. Now it was my turn.

“That’s pretty badass,” Mike said, “but what’s it mean?”

I could not say much beyond the fact that this image was to honor the team I worked with. Mike was used to my cryptic responses. I settled into the chair as he got to work. Needles danced along my skin, bringing to life the image of a hooded death’s-head impaled on a dagger. The slogan: Shadow Hunters. That phrase appeared just under the skull. Above the hooded figure, in Latin, the words read, “Daring to seek the truth through the Darkness, God willing.”

For the record, I never really liked tattoos. Ironically, I had inked each tattoo on my body in honor of someone else. Usually they were humble reminders of the sacrifices made by people I had served with. I was now in my late thirties, but years of warfare, guns, and exploding ordnance had done a number on me. I was deaf in one ear, scars lined my upper body from the various surgeries I had undergone, my joints were shot, and I had been exposed to a number of chemicals and compounds that now took their toll on

me, likely the result of military burn pits. For those that don't know, burn pits were a common disposal practice at military sites in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere the military had occupied. All kinds of waste were burned in the open air and created various health issues for those who had exposure to the smoke. In the eyes of the government, I was considered disabled. I felt guilty for the diagnosis because other veterans had it much worse than me. I guess you could say I had a bit of survivor's guilt.

At least all my injuries were documented and, according to the US government, "Service Related." Those words would soon play a big role in the next chapter of AATIP.

As time went on, I kept learning more and more about the darker, more sinister aspect to UAP encounters. The "biological effects"—medical consequences—experienced by human beings who encountered UAP technology.

I'd read the bio-effects reports going back many years. Many patients had had their lives ruined, both physically and psychologically, by UAP. Reports, photos, and medical records from all over the world, over decades, all showed the same thing. I'd marched through the macros embedded in the Colares database prepared by Bob Bigelow's scientists. Every witness, abductee—whatever their situation—had put their bodies into the line of fire. My choices in warfare were undertaken voluntarily. Theirs had been made unknowingly, unwillingly.

Due to patient confidentiality and HIPAA, the federal law that protects sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge, Will conscientiously protected the names and identities of his patients. I knew the health issues of several individuals because they worked with me and revealed that they were patients. Other cases that I learned about were equally troubling and, at the same time, fascinating.

December 1980: Two women and a boy driving on a lonely Texas road saw what resembled a diamond-shaped UAP descend and hover over a nearby tree. The boy, the grandson of one of the women, was too terrified to move. The women got out to have a look. They sensed a massive amount of heat emanating from the object. Later, after they fled the scene, their symptoms moved swiftly from headaches to severe skin burns, nausea, diarrhea, eye damage, lesions, exhaustion, hair loss, and the shedding of their fingernails. The boy, who remained in the car, also had eye problems and

suddenly needed to wear glasses for his schoolwork. One woman later developed severe cataracts, the other breast cancer.

December 1980: I mentioned this incident earlier, but here we look at a different aspect. Strange lights appeared near a joint UK-US military facility in Suffolk, England, where the two allies had stored nuclear weapons in a secret bunker. Two security policemen, John Burroughs and Jim Penniston, found a landed UAP in nearby Rendlesham Forest. Their recollections are fuzzy at best. The watches both men wore that night lost forty-five minutes of time when compared to the timepieces of the airmen back on base. (Hal Puthoff calls this the Rip Van Winkle Effect.) Burroughs later experienced a series of worsening health effects—vision problems, white gums, heart murmurs, heart tissue scarring—all of which culminated in heart surgery to correct damaged leaflets in his mitral valve.

August 2007: A mother and daughter driving at night on a road near Davis, California, saw three blue orbs appear on the road. Two of the orbs allegedly penetrated the vehicle; one passed directly through the older woman's upper chest and exited her upper right arm. The older woman reported feeling nausea immediately; both women were unclear about how much time had elapsed during the encounter. Later, the mother began to gain weight, experience premature aging, and develop skin rashes, hair loss, blurry vision, hearing loss, and osteoarthritis. Two years later, doctors diagnosed this previously healthy woman with breast cancer; she later underwent a bilateral mastectomy.

I could go on. The history is well documented, and terrifying. One of the early Bigelow researchers, John F. Schuessler, collected examples of civilian bio-effects dating back to 1950. It's truly puzzling material. The litany of complications reported touch upon all five senses, and beyond. Sleep issues. Nervous issues. Fuzzy thinking and time distortion are common. Some women insist that they became pregnant following UAP encounters. There are the "usual" reports of abductions and implants. And some people insist that they developed some sort of psychic abilities following encounters.

Certain medical professionals who joined us discussed biological effects extensively. We felt certain that the severity of the symptoms was determined by two data points: each victim's own set of genetic circumstances, and how close the victim was to the UAP or phenomena at the time of the event. Soon it became evident that a graduated scale of symptoms could be explained by the person's proximity to the UAP and exposure to radiation.

A really good question is whether these UAP health impacts are deliberate, or just a consequence of the UAP technology. That is, are the UAP intentionally targeting humans, or is the harm accidental? Outside of an event like Colares, I would argue the harm is unintentional. Jet engines were never developed to be deployed as weapons, but if you stand behind one when a commercial airplane is revving up, you're going to be hurt—badly. Whatever technology makes UAP fly clearly generates a form of radiation that can be deleterious to living human tissue.

But how do we account for the other weird things, such as time distortion, perceived psychic ability, and so on? Is the radiation doing it, or is there something else at play?

People would be surprised to learn that the US government has awarded multiple servicemen 100 percent disability, in writing, due to medical issues resulting from their close encounters with UAP.

As mentioned earlier, the late senator John McCain of Arizona was one of the first champions to recognize the need to assess and provide assistance to these individuals.

Researchers have long argued that UAP appear to be controlled by one or several superior intelligences. The Tic Tac encountered by the *Nimitz* pilots seemed to anticipate what actions the human pilots planned to take before actually taking them. A UAP encountered by an Iranian pilot in 1976 seemed to have anticipated the precise moment that the human pilot was about to fire an AIM-9 missile at the craft. At that instant, the pilot's control panel failed. He only recovered control (and saved his life) when the UAP disappeared from sight. In 1982 a UAP did exactly what a civilian witness wished it would do. Just as a driver in Hudson Valley, New York, looked at a boomerang-shaped UAP in the sky and thought, "Gee, I wish it would come closer so I can get a better look at it," the craft changed its course and flew right toward the individual's car. When the driver became terrified, he sensed a message in his mind telling him, "Don't be afraid." Interestingly, some individuals who claim to be abductees often detail how their captors seem to communicate wordlessly, similar to the way we do in our dreams. More concerning, some alleged abductees describe being controlled and restrained in some manner so that they won't panic.

For these reasons and others, some investigators think the pilots of these UAP possess highly evolved psychic abilities. But is there a deeper, more profound possibility? What if enhanced consciousness and physical

manipulation of reality are critical components of the aircraft's propulsion system? It sounds like something out of the Jedi playbook: a power source integral to the universe that is inherently intelligent and can keep aircraft flying. From a scientific perspective, I don't necessarily subscribe to this idea, but it can't be ruled out either.

It isn't that far a leap. Experiments by DARPA in the past showed that pilots can indeed remotely control an aircraft, using their thoughts and a special interface. A helmet specially designed to interpret thought and a pilot's brain waves and translate them to electronic signals that control the aircraft. Honeywell Aerospace has worked on a similar technology for more than a decade. UAP could use the same sort of technology, at least in principle. What if some otherworldly intelligence is linked to the power of UAP? As one researcher argued, perhaps enhanced consciousness is *a fundamental force of the universe*.

There are also experiments like the ones conducted at Laurentian University in Canada that fitted subjects with a so-called God Helmet and demonstrated how easy it was to manipulate and alter human consciousness. To push this further, perhaps our much-vaunted consciousness is not uniquely human at all and is part of a greater collective.

Maybe, before one can understand how these aircraft fly, we have to plumb the untapped secrets of our own brains. To explore that aspect, we must first all agree on a definition of consciousness. Until we can do that, I am not sure we will ever have consensus regarding UAP.

Some of the AAWSAP/AATIP team had been grappling with a collection of cases with "experiencers" that would explore these very questions. An experiencer is someone who has allegedly had a close encounter, and has been affected in either a positive or negative manner.

In this case, the experiencers were eyewitnesses of UAP; some allegedly had implants and claimed they were abducted. The ones I found most intriguing were those who apparently had touched or approached crashed or functional UAP. They seemed to all be having medical issues, such as buzzing in the head, bouts of nausea, irritability, unexplained skin rashes, and so on. In more drastic instances, it was as if something had fried certain parts of their brains.

Whenever Will was involved and we talked about those cases, I was never privy to the names of the patients unless they self-identified to me or I referred them to Will in the first place. Will was always protective of his

patients' privacy and would often remind us that his sacred trust with patients would never be broken, even at the expense of AAWSAP/AATIP. I respected him for that.

Will made inquiries with a world-class immunologist who he thought might be able to help us figure out what was going on inside these people's brains. Garry P. Nolan had a chaired position and his own laboratory at Stanford University, where an army of postdocs and graduate students investigated various mysteries of human genetics. Garry had published more than three hundred research articles, developed forty patents, and invented several of the experimental instruments in his lab. Colleagues have nominated Garry for the Nobel Prize. (If he hasn't received it by the time you're reading this, then the world is not yet ready to learn the truth about his work.)

In many ways, Garry was a lot like Hal, a genius at both theory and engineering. Garry's advantage over his peers? He was a no-nonsense, just-follow-the-science kind of guy. Garry knew anyone who was anyone in the research field, and he wasn't afraid to speak his mind or challenge common mindsets or the status quo.

He was also a researcher who was completely and totally committed to eradicating cancer. Through Garry, I learned of a network of individuals who poured millions of dollars of their own money each year into cancer research, and I had the privilege of meeting the billionaire entrepreneur Sean Parker and the entertainer Lady Gaga, to name two people who are doing more for humanity than they will ever take credit for. These were the sort of circles in which Garry ran.

The work we did was so weird that we had grown accustomed to researchers rebuffing us once they learned that we were investigating UAP. The subject has been off-limits for "serious" scientists for decades. Verboten. Because of this, we routinely kept outside researchers in the dark. We sent scientists a piece of an alleged UAP to analyze without providing any background, a blind study if you will. Instead of us spelling out that they may be looking at a recovered piece of a UAP, they might be told that the object in question is part of some foreign technology American forces recovered. That's the only way we could exploit the expertise of conventional scientists.

Will flew to California with a small team that included Colm Kelleher, a biochemist who was the deputy administrator for BAASS during AAWSAP, and the French scientist Jacques Vallée, who had US government clearances

related to the investigation of UAP. Kelleher was a reputable scientist in his own right. He was smart and accomplished, and he sported an Irish accent, which, if you ask my wife, made him that much more endearing. Among civilians, Jacques is probably best known for inspiring the French scientist character played by François Truffaut in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. As a young researcher, Vallée worked with and organized the papers of Dr. Hynek of the Air Force's Project Blue Book.

When they first met in Garry's office at Stanford, Will's team had brought MRI images of the brains of the UAP experiencers—all servicemen and intelligence officials—who had given them permission to share their medical data. At first glance, Garry concurred with Will that all these people had suffered brain scarring. I was told that this is what doctors call white-matter disease because the scars appear as white in medical images.

After digging through files, Garry noticed something else. All 105 of the patients were high-functioning and had high IQs. All had an overdeveloped part of the brain known as the caudate-putamen. This is the area of the brain that many researchers have begun to associate with intuition, though the link has been proposed by some scientists as far back as the 1960s. Some researchers had also correlated the size of one's caudate-putamen with one's intelligence, but of course this is a controversial claim that many researchers still disagree with. Nevertheless, we all have caudate-putamens in our brains, but Garry theorized that people with this kind of enhanced structure might be exquisitely adept at sizing up a situation and drawing conclusions from very sparse information. In other words, some people with a larger caudate-putamen were like organic supercomputers, able to process more data than the average person and be more perceptive to things most people wouldn't or couldn't perceive.

Hearing that reminded me of some words I had heard said in the past about talented remote viewers. Remote viewers were said to demonstrate "extraordinary judgment," an ability to retain and synthesize vast amounts of data, and were often classified as "sense makers," possessing an uncanny predictive foresight.

Garry's observation was the first finding. It had nothing to do with the medical problems these people were having. It was just an interesting note about how their brains functioned.

Now that Will knew what to look for, when he got back to his office in Detroit he sifted through the MRIs of his patients, paying closer attention to

their caudate-putamens. In this way he assembled *another* subset of patients he wanted to share with Garry. The people in this data set were military employees recruited for an unusual program originally run by the CIA. In order to be successful in this program, you *absolutely* had to draw conclusions from sparse information. You might even infer that their caudate-putamens had bestowed upon these people something of a sixth sense. Their brains were like antennae that allowed them to tune in to certain mysteries of the universe. (And, no, I don't consider myself part of that elite talent pool.)

It turned out that *many* of the patients in this specific study group had been associated in the past with the elite military operation that trained soldiers to become remote viewers. The program I was being considered for early in my career with Gene Lessman. That's right: some of the Army's psychic spies had the same hyperdeveloped caudateputamen in their brains.

What a stunning finding. I couldn't help wondering if this finding could explain my experiences with remote viewing. I had no idea where Will and Garry's research would lead them next, but I knew I had to stay tuned to this unfolding story. It had just become far more personal than I could ever imagine.

CHAPTER 11

BIOLOGICAL REMAINS

Several of the senior officials I worked with eventually told me that when one of my colleagues worked at the CIA some decades earlier, he was given an official report/autopsy of the dissection of a nonhuman body that was recovered from an unspecified crashed UAP. This colleague asked me not to use his name. The report stated that the brain had no convolutions (the wrinkled exterior portion of the brain). Rather, what was described was a smooth surface, similar to lower-functioning animals here on earth. It also described a conjoined gut and liver, and a three-chambered heart, like reptiles. The author of the autopsy came to the conclusion the cadaver did not appear to have the requisite brain capacity to design and create aircraft capable of such stunning maneuverability. It was postulated that it might be some sort of biological automaton, created by something else with a greater intellect. In that era at the CIA, brain/neuroanatomical science considered smooth exterior brain surfaces to be indicative of extremely low animal intelligence incapable of tool making; no sophisticated communication capability beyond sight/smell (pheromones)/primitive vocal noises; and no high-level cognition. Let me emphasize that this is what was told to me at the time. As you'll see below, that thinking later changed.

Eric and some of our other colleagues were familiar with TRW's rumored crash-retrieval program run out of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio, and they shared this view, based on their recoveries. For background, TRW has long been a major US defense contractor and was eventually purchased by Northrop Grumman, another major defense contractor.

Credible sources, including those involved at AATIP, told me the facts from several historic UAP crashes from which nonhuman bodies were recovered by the US, in addition to the Roswell crash.

Among the significant early crash retrievals was one deceased nonhuman

body recovered in December 1950 in Ciudad Acuña, Mexico, across the Rio Grande from Del Rio, Texas. Again, in 1989, four deceased nonhumans were also allegedly recovered from a crash of a large Tic Tac in Kazakhstan, Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, the opinion from decades ago about brains was recently proven wrong when numerous studies of all kinds of animals demonstrated that animal species having smooth exterior brain surfaces do have complex communication techniques, do make tools and teach their young how to use them, and do use math and geometry to communicate with mates (certain fish do this) or form sophisticated mental models of nature surrounding them. Even bees have sophisticated social hierarchical societies with high-level communication and aviation navigation methods and mental mapping, etc. So life forms with smooth brain surfaces can be high-functioning.

You have to admire the stunning anthropocentric bias of past assessments. How would these doctors know about the brain function of a nonhuman being? How could they presume to know how an alien brain worked? Were they even looking in the right place?

Was it possible that nonhuman life had built synthetic beings? My colleagues who had knowledge of official reports on biological remains posited that the nonhumans piloting UAP are either naturally evolved beings or engineered biological automatons.

Some researchers and "experiencers" have speculated that one species, the so-called Nordic aliens, has created the lesser species, called the Grays, as their minions to do their dirty work. Seemed a bit like slave labor to me, but with no hard evidence, it didn't really matter what I or anyone else thought. Hierarchical relationships exist in nature—*our* nature. In bee and ant colonies, the queens breed "workers," subordinates who perform much of the labor in their nest or hive. Typically, these insects cannot reproduce but perform vital roles for the colony. Ants farm another species, aphids, the way humans raise livestock, because well-fed aphids secrete a sticky, sweet substance called "honeydew" that the ants themselves crave. It's not really a parasitic relationship, but not quite symbiotic either.

As humans, truly undesirable work is increasingly performed by computers, robots, and AI. Hollywood has given us numerous synthetic life forms, like the ones in *Blade Runner, The Terminator,* and *Ex Machina* . In Ernest Cline's epic science fiction novel *Ready Player Two,* he paints a picture of an advanced nonphysical AI that could cause real problems for

humanity. And according to some press reports, current efforts in China are working to biologically engineer a superhuman. We are not so far away from being able to do this ourselves.

Interestingly, I have often heard senior senators and intelligence officials blame lack of imagination for major intelligence failures. And I can't help but think of what my friend Steve Justice, former director of Advanced Systems Development at Lockheed Martin's mysterious Skunk Works division, always says: "There is no such thing as impossible. Impossible is just something you haven't seen yet."

CHAPTER 12

THE OBSERVABLES

Los Alamos, New Mexico, 2013: Scientists and researchers at the legendary White Sands missile test range, the same location where the Manhattan Project constructed the components for the atomic bomb during World War II, were testing yet another device (whose nature I cannot divulge) when witnesses spotted several mysterious and luminous orbs moving over a nearby ridge.

These witnesses included scientists, security personnel, and an FBI special agent assigned to the Albuquerque Field Office. The orbs moved toward the test site, hovered over the device as if scanning it for intel, then zipped away, brashly flying over the heads of bewildered scientists. Later, several eyewitnesses saw a formation of disc-shaped objects that seemed to know precisely where the device being tested was located. This occurred several times over a few days.

[redacted][1]

Somehow, someone had learned to penetrate US airspace completely undetected, fly unchallenged over one of the nation's most sensitive military research areas, collect information on one of our most sensitive technologies, then—*poof*—disappear.

The initial DoD reports I saw painted a picture of government witnesses standing around watching an almost obvious display of out-of-this-world performance characteristics.

[redacted]

* * * *

at the Pentagon, I had perks like good parking and was sometimes offered use of a federal Gulfstream V (G-V) from the "Starlifters" VIP fleet at Andrews Air Force Base. "Starlifters" referred to the stars on the epaulets of the generals who f lew these craft to destinations all over the world.

Once, ages ago, I'd flown on a government G-V when asked to accompany a colleague. He enjoyed showing me how the other half lived, asking the onboard chef to whip us up sandwiches and omelets and summoning the waitstaff to pour us glasses of wine. Who would have thought the US government served wine to its employees?

My colleague was a good man, but that excursion rubbed me the wrong way.

Wine and steak sandwiches on a $45 million plane? How was that a *government* vehicle?

No. Not for me. It felt wrong to live so large on the public dime. Besides, I grew up humbly and saw these privileges as unnecessary, or even obscene. Maybe it was the old stories my father told about how Cuba always had two faces, one of privilege and one of the peasants. And we all know what happened when the peasant finally had enough.

If given a choice when flying, I would much prefer taking a "gray tail," an Air Force cargo transport, over a flashy G-V. I felt more at home riding in a cargo net than in a gilded leather seat. If given the choice upon landing, I'd take a Humvee over a limousine any day. I had more in common with the sergeant in my security detail than I did with the colonel who babysat and briefed me at my destination. At the end of each mission, it was not uncommon for me to invite the enlisted soldiers out for a beer while politely declining a dinner invitation with the base commander. The enlisted were my people: hardworking grunts who understood the value of good leadership and the chaos caused by a lack thereof. The words of the great American entrepreneur Harry Selfridge always rang true to me: "A boss says '*Go!*' A leader says '*Let's go!*'" To that I'd add, "*I'll go first!*"

"Don't waste time," Pentagon staffers routinely told me. "Take the jet."

"No way," I'd say. "You know how much gas that thing uses?"

Besides, there was a weekly flight to Guantanamo Bay that had been used for the 9/11 Military Commissions trial. It was a 737 and could haul hundreds of people at a time. This seemed to me a better use of taxpayer money. My work with Guantanamo Bay brought endless rounds of drama and stress. An attorney for one of the 9/11 suspects labeled me in open court as the "US

Czar of Torture." From that moment, I would forever be branded by some as the nation's Darth Vader. At one point I was informed that Europe had issued an open arrest warrant for me and anyone involved in the notorious Rendition, Detention, and Interrogation (RDI) program of high-value detainees (HVDs). The International Court of Human Rights had decreed that any US intelligence officer involved in that effort would face trial if arrested. From my perspective, I was serving my country and my president, and preventing another 9/11.

I came home some nights so exhausted that I could not sleep. My brain played for me the images of those UAP flying in formation in the Predator video. In my nightmares, terrorists hunted down my family. UAP and HVDs haunted my days and nights. But dealing with both was my job. Failure was not an option. I had been to war several times by then and I kept telling myself, At least I am not being shot at and I don't have bombs under my car. That's how I dealt with it. But it took a terrible toll on my health. I gained forty pounds in the process.

Jenn sensed me tossing and turning when I did sleep. Yes, I knew I had to relax, I told her, but given my workload, I often didn't know how I was supposed to do that. The Obama administration had sworn to shut down GTMO, or Gitmo, as Guantanamo is often called, even though they had me running their most sensitive program. Colleagues told me that they had attended briefings in which senior leadership tossed around my name to absolve themselves of any responsibility for GTMO not closing, choosing instead to feed me to the sharks as chum.

"Don't blame me," one senior said. "GTMO is still open because of one person and one person only: Lue Elizondo."

Seriously? A GS-15 employee was responsible for blocking an entire department *and* an entire government from doing what it wanted to do? Meanwhile, I learned facts most government lifers didn't know. The recidivism rate of terrorists returning to the battlefield was much higher than publicly stated—more than 40 percent. I had lost several friends to Pentagon whitewashing. They had been killed by individuals who were released and later chose to exit this life with bombs strapped to their chests. The administration wanted to hide that fact. There was also the issue of detainees using the interpreters on their defense team to ferry messages back and forth to other terrorists. This was the most notoriously secure prison, Camp 7, which held some of the worst terrorists, those who admitted to involvement

in 9/11. My colleagues, like John Robert, and I believed that these people should not be released under any circumstances, but the powers that be did not all agree. On both issues I was involved in, GTMO and UAP, I felt the best interest of the American people should be given higher priority. Things were happening that were being withheld from the American public and Congress.

My life at this point was a tornado. Jenn was my North Star when for brief moments the sky would clear, full of a wisdom. The accident in the crosswalk in Annapolis had changed her outlook on so many things. She no longer cared for the trappings of the upper-middle-class life we were supposedly pursuing. She now saw with utter clarity what was most important in life. She asked me, if you died tomorrow, what would you wish you had devoted your life to?

On our way to divorce court more than once, Jenn now cared for three things and three things only: our two girls and me. Whenever I came home immersed in the stress of DoD's bureaucracy, she calmed my mind and body with her wry sense of humor, reminding me of the source of her own epiphany. "Dude," she would say, "you need to get run over by a truck! Maybe then you will see things differently."

Well, I was not yet ready to do that, but it was advice that helped me punch through the workplace drama. I wanted to move the ball forward. I craved answers to the mystery of UAP.

Back at AATIP, we focused our work on simple questions.

What do we know about UAP? *What can we boil all our knowledge down to*? Intelligence officers are driven to find patterns, to fit together the pieces of a massive jigsaw puzzle. The UAP subject is so vast, no one could ever weave all the threads. The subject touches on everything from how UAP fly to witness accounts, medical questions, aerospace engineering, unexplained phenomena such as orbs and lights, quantum physics, and the human cognitive abilities such as remote viewing.

Because of our military perspective, we often got hung up on things such as how the aircraft *looked*. The shape of UAP is important and was significant to us cracking how they operated, but we also focused on their capabilities. When trained observers like pilots witnessed UAP in action, what startled the pilots about these objects? What impressed the aviation experts when we showed them the videos?

We realized all the advanced capabilities observed can be categorized

according to five distinct performance characteristics. We called these the observables.

The first observable is hypersonic velocity.

Sound travels at a speed of 762 miles per hour. *Hypersonic* means Mach 5, five times the speed of sound—about 3,800 to 4,000 miles per hour.

Do humans today have vehicles that can do over Mach 5? Yes, we do. For example, the X-15, the NASA Space Shuttle, and certain missiles can operate at speeds above Mach 5, but only in the upper atmosphere or in space, where the atmosphere is less dense. At low altitudes, the air is more dense, which makes high-speed travel exponentially more difficult.

The SR-71 Blackbird can just about hit Mach 5 at high altitudes. Made up almost entirely of titanium, any faster, the aircraft would be incinerated by the heat generated.

Additionally, when our aircraft go hypersonic, we usually hear a sonic boom as the sound barrier is broken. There are other associated signatures as well, such as heat ablation and atmospheric ionization, which can likewise be detected by our sensors.

UAP are routinely clocked traveling at *Mach 17* and faster at low altitudes, even at sea level. That's more than 13,000 miles per hour at low altitudes.

The next observable is instantaneous acceleration, which is defined as a sudden increase in velocity. The UAP we are observing are traveling at 13,000 miles per hour, sometimes faster, and instantaneously accelerating and stopping on a dime. This includes high-speed turns that would normally require a conventional aircraft many miles to complete.

Do humans have aircraft that can perform instant acceleration? No—not like this.

As an example, at full speed, the SR-71, known as the Blackbird, requires airspace roughly half the size of the state of Ohio to complete a right-or left-hand turn. By contrast, UAP make immediate right-angle turns at speeds up to ten times faster than the SR-71.

One of the consequences of instantaneous acceleration is the enormous g-forces generated. The term *g-force* describes how the impact of gravity and acceleration *feels* when it hits the human body. That thrilling feeling you get when a roller coaster dips up and down is all positive and negative g-force. You also get it when the coaster car is running at a relatively slow speed—then punches it.

Fighter pilots can experience up to 9 g-forces for a short duration of time. High-g maneuvers run the risk of blackout, injury, or death. For this reason, pilots wear special g-suits. Without them they'd be rendered unconscious as blood fights to reach their brains or, worse, floods their brains.

One of the most highly maneuverable manned aircraft is the General Dynamics F-16. This older yet very capable aircraft can handle approximately 17 g's before the craft experiences structural failure. Wings begin to snap off, and the plane literally starts to disintegrate.

In contrast, UAP display the ability to handle forces as high as several thousand g's, well beyond the limits that the human body can withstand. Conventional aircraft would be shredded into confetti-sized pieces.

The next observable is a bit of an oxymoron, but it's low observability.

All modern technologies have a signature, whether it be environmental, electronic, acoustic, thermal, or visual. For example, most aircraft leave visible contrails in the sky as they fly and the heat from their exhaust turns water vapor into a thin stream of cloud. We see these white streaks every day. UAP, however, leave almost no observable signature, no sonic booms or obvious sound at all, no atmospheric ionization, no heat ablation, no contrails.

Luckily, there are some instances where we have collected limited data on UAP, using visual collection systems, electromagnetic systems such as radar, and acoustic collection systems such as sonar. However, capturing clear data has been very challenging.

Sometimes it's what you don't see that matters most. UAP are diabolically hard to spot and identify with cameras, radar, or the naked eye.

The next observable is transmedium travel, the ability to operate in multiple environments, or domains, such as space, our atmosphere, and underwater.

To be clear, we do have vehicles in our current inventory that are indeed transmedium. For example, seaplanes can fly and float, but let's face it: a seaplane is neither a very good aircraft nor a very good boat. Why? Because to build the craft that can operate in both environments, air and water, its designers were forced to make compromises in performance in order to make the vehicle do what it needs to do.

UAP, on the other hand, have been observed operating superbly in space, in the air, and underwater. The same vehicle, in other words, can do all equally well. Moreover, they do this without compromising their

performance.

As an example, when you throw a rock into a pond, you'd expect to see a splash and a ripple. That is not the case with UAP. These objects have been seen going from space into our atmosphere and then diving into the ocean without slowing down, without splashing, and with no obvious effect on the surrounding environment.

The next observable is best described in the vernacular as antigravity. *Antigravity* is a bad word in most scientific circles, but in essence, it means the ability to defy the natural effects of earth's gravitational pull on objects in the environment. All of us experience gravity on earth equally because the mass of the earth is consistent. It pulls us all toward the center of the earth equally at 9.8 meters per second.

As a result, we experience gravity on earth as the equivalent of 1 g-force. Gravity is directly related to the mass of the object.

If I were standing on the moon and you were standing on Jupiter, each of us would experience gravity differently: the gravity on the moon is weaker because its mass is much smaller than Jupiter's mass. This is all part of Newtonian physics. It wasn't until Einstein that we learned that gravity is much more than simply a pulling force. Gravity is in fact the warping of space-time itself. That's right, the very fabric of space is inextricably linked to the notion of time itself.

If I were standing on the moon and wearing a wristwatch, I would experience time slightly faster than I would on earth or Jupiter because the mass of the moon is much less and therefore warps space-time a little less.

UAP, however, seem to defy the natural effect of earth's gravity without any obvious means of doing so—that is, no signs of propulsion or lift.

No wings, no rotors, no propellers. No control surfaces or means to maneuver.

UAP stand out because they can achieve all *five* of these observables. They may not display all of them in each individual encounter, but it looked to us as if they were capable of achieving them when pressed to do so.

The sixth observable is not a flight characteristic and has not yet been discussed publicly by our government, but I have mentioned it earlier: biological effects.

Again, many service personnel and intelligence officials who had UAP encounters have suffered biological effects as a result of their experiences. These include radiation burns, internal organ damage, and other very real and

documented medical issues.

Biological effects also include paradoxical time and perception distortions revealed when witnesses talk about their encounters.

Some pilots who were debriefed insisted that a particular encounter lasted only five minutes but the clock indicated that thirty minutes had in fact elapsed. Meanwhile, their aircraft showed that they'd consumed only five minutes' worth of fuel. Some can chalk this up to an electrical glitch, but we had seen enough evidence to say differently.

Put another way, the way we experience time *feels* linear. One second follows another.

But that's not how time really works. Thanks to Einstein, we know time is relative. For that matter, so is space. It's a hard concept to grasp.

We are now learning that time may also be relative to scale. The physicist Max Planck developed a scale called Planck Time to describe what happened in the universe during its initial phase of existence and expansion. Each unit of Planck Time is unimaginably tiny. There are more Planck seconds in one human second then there are seconds since the dawn of the universe to now. Fourteen and a half billion years is a lot of human seconds. Planck Time helps us visualize our proto-universe when it was smaller than a molecule. It may have been small, but it was already a complex universe. Bottom line: time is stranger than we imagine, and may be the key to the UAP mystery.

We created our list of six observables to better understand what we couldn't understand. They allowed us to better identify and separate the knowns from the unknowns.

Around the time we were working on our first list, a bizarre sighting occurred in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, that seemed to embody so much of what we've just talked about. A UAP was spotted near the airport and was quickly tracked by a helicopter from the US Department of Homeland Security. Initially thought to be a drug runner or a drone, the object was seen near a National Guard base. The object, small, asymmetrical, and lobed, seemed to detect that it was being monitored by one of our helicopters. When it did, it zipped away. The pilots watched as the object swooped across an airfield and headed straight for the open waters of the Atlantic. As the helicopter pursued it, the object then did the unimaginable. It dove into the ocean (transmedium travel). That should be the end of the story, but no—UAP always have a way of upping the ante. This thing popped back out of the ocean and *split itself into two seemingly different craft* before disappearing from view (low

observability), all the while not making any splash or wake.

Incredible, but not the first time we had seen this type of performance.

In the famous sightings that occurred in Michigan in 1966, witnesses also saw lights that split at one point. Outwardly, the average person would not confuse orbs and lights with aircraft, but if low observability were at play, maybe they would.

Then there was the incident in 1999 involving a Navy recovery helicopter and a cruise missile. The Navy often tested its cruise missiles from Puerto Rican waters. At a predetermined time, the Navy would fire a missile over the ocean. When the missile ran out of fuel, it would splash into the ocean and sink. Soon the missile would blow its ballast and pop to the surface for retrieval. A helicopter crew would then return the missile for analysis.

On a sunny afternoon, a crew—one pilot, one copilot, one crew chief, and a frogman—were midway through a recovery. As the frogman dangled from his hoist, a large, circular object the size of a small island began to rise to the surface, directly under the missile and the frogman. Not a submarine, the object was circular in shape, black, and massive. The pilot told me that it was black as the devil and the water began to churn and roll like a witch's brew. The crew panicked. Seeing the ocean churning below them, the helicopter pilot climbed. As the helicopter rose, the pilot noticed the missile getting sucked underwater. The massive shadow sank and completely disappeared. The incident ceased as quickly as it had started, leaving the crew awestruck. Incidentally, that missile was designed to carry several types of payloads. A tactical nuclear warhead is one of them, though in this case it was simply a practice missile.

We pushed ourselves to consider why UAP displayed such a preference for large bodies of water. Were these objects retreating to an underwater base? Were they plunging into oceans to spy on nuclear submarines? Were they simply hiding from humanity? Most of the earth is water, the majority of which remains unexplored, so if you wanted to hide from humanity, that's an obvious place to go. There were many theories.

As time passed, Hal asked for and was granted permission to publish all but one of the papers he had written for us. He contributed his work to a serious scientific, peer-reviewed publication, the *Journal of the British Interplanetary Society* . The article discussed how UAP might operate, though the acronyms *UAP* and *UFO* do not appear anywhere in it. To its credit, the publication has long been committed to promoting unusual,

progressive ideas in physics.

Until then, no one in government or in the physics community had ever given Hal what we had: a list of verified attributes culled from the most reliable detection platforms in existence.

We were like police detectives. Hal and Eric were like supergenius criminal profilers. Their theories were meaningless without the police evidence, but the police evidence was useless without a motive. By drawing up the observables, we had cut through the BS. When you boil seventy-five years of detective work down, what does the US government know about UAP? What can we prove?

This was useful, especially to a scientist like Hal. He couldn't wait to toss our work and his theories into the supercollider of his brain. When he left my office, he sounded eager to get to work, embarking on a mission to explore more answers.

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1 In this and the redaction that follows, how a three-letter agency handled the matter internally was redacted by DoD.

CHAPTER 13

WHERE THE EVIDENCE LIES

We were told specifically that a defense contractor, associated with the Legacy Program, was in possession of UAP materials of nonhuman origin, made by some civilization from some distant planet. When Jay went to inquire for us, the contractor acknowledged that, yes, they were in possession of this material. They said they would give us access to it but first we needed to get permission from the secretary of the US Air Force.

This was an important development. The contractor was acknowledging a long-standing memorandum generated by the Air Force which made the contractor beholden to the USAF's strict handling requirements. This proved that the Air Force had indeed not only known about crash retrievals but had a historic control over them and leverage with this defense contractor and probably others. In the words of the contractor, after decades, they were no longer able to glean any meaningful understanding of the recovered material and they considered it now an expensive liability.

We already knew or suspected that a handful of aerospace firms had been cleared to accept and keep forever any off-world tech that came into the hands of the US government. But they weren't talking—and would actively work to get you fired or your clearance canceled if you start asking questions. So this was very interesting, but too good to be true.

We now knew the Air Force had long been a key player in the Legacy efforts and this contractor probably had a good laugh sending us on this fools' errand. In reality, they had no intention of giving this to us. It was an in-your-face reminder of the power of the military-industrial complex and specifically their power when it comes to the Legacy UAP program.

From the moment I came on board the team, I learned that the Air Force was stubbornly and mysteriously uncooperative on the topic of UAP. Their resistance was irritatingly real. I cannot enumerate the times we sent carefully

crafted emails to Air Force liaisons requesting information or follow-up details on UAP incidents, only to have the requests denied or ignored entirely.

In my early days, I just assumed the USAF was in denial. Maybe they felt burned for the clown show they orchestrated with Projects Sign, Grudge, and Blue Book? Maybe they were embarrassed that they didn't have dominance in our skies. They were supremely responsible for protecting US airspace. But when it came to UAP, they had failed miserably. Maybe, to Air Force leadership, to speak truthfully of UAP meant owning up to that realization. Or maybe current leadership simply didn't know much about the topic. Perhaps they had buried the past when they euthanized Project Blue Book in 1969. But I had grown older and wiser, and more informed. It had become extremely clear to me that the Air Force was part of the cover-up.

Days went by, and I grew increasingly angry. Here we were, ostensibly investigating the unthinkable, and others in government were actively hiding it from us. We knew that our adversaries had their own UAP research programs. We also had incursions of our most sensitive restricted airspace happening regularly, and urgent national security concerns we were investigating. How could others working for our government not share what they knew with us? This was unfathomable and egregious to me. This went against every instinct of national security. In essence, if you are not part of our solution, then you are part of our problem.

I thought about 9/11 and how it could have been prevented if agencies had shared information. In that case, you had CIA with information, FBI with information, other organizations with information, and frankly, if they shared it all together, they may have prevented the Al Qaeda attack.

We had to push the issue.

Knowing the US government had recovered both intact and partial craft, where were the biological remains? "Where the hell are the biosamples?"

After years of work on the topic, we still had not received an answer to this key question. What reached my ears instead were excuse after excuse. We had data, reports, photos, video, and countless eyewitnesses.

If you accept that the "modern" era of UAP sightings dates to 1947, that means those who came before us had almost eighty years to obfuscate and literally bury the truth.

Senior officials told me continuously and confidentially that big aerospace companies have been part of the Legacy Program to retrieve and

reverse-engineer crash materials. The big names included Lockheed Martin, TRW, McDonnell Douglas, Northrop Grumman, Boeing, Raytheon, BAE Systems, and the Aerospace Corporation, all of which have long been principal members of the US military-industrial complex. I was also told that Monsanto, a biotechnology corporation absorbed by Bayer in 2018, may have historically been involved, most likely dealing with biological specimens.

Who knows how many extremely valuable inventions and technological advancements came off the back of this research, and how much money was made by these contractors.

If another organization had eighty years of information on what we were investigating, then we should have been working with them rather than in competition. We should have been working together to address the national security concerns. The existence of the Legacy Program would mean there was a deep conspiracy within the US government to keep the truth from US citizens. Such a program would require huge resources, not only to conduct daily operations. The costs of program security alone would be obscene. I later learned that the truth was far more complex and shocking than I'd imagined.

Regardless, we needed access to the biosamples and technological materials if we were going to make any progress. We were racing against time. Could we find someone who directly worked on the reverse-engineering programs and would be willing to help us? Or had someone placed the fear of God and death in them? Only later did we learn that the powers that be exploited an archaic law, the US Espionage Act, dating back to the early twentieth century, to keep people quiet. They waved this act around to threaten military personnel and contractors that they would be executed without trial if they spoke.

Eventually, after relentlessly pushing, I learned that nonhuman biological samples had moved many times and *some* were now either at Fort Detrick, Maryland, or with the US Food and Drug Administration. Ironically, the samples had been moved around so much that their original chain of custody might have been lost, with samples sitting in a refrigerator somewhere and no one having a clue what they were or where they came from. As for bovine samples related to alleged cattle mutilations, those could be found with the US Department of Agriculture. A veterinarian from Montana who happened to work with the USDA and conducted autopsies on some of the cattle expressed his concern to me that these poor creatures had been killed by a

technology we have yet to see and that no one was taking it seriously, other than the ranchers. I had no way of getting to these or other samples, which only increased the frustration we all felt.

CHAPTER 14

SEARCHING FOR BREAKTHROUGHS

Hal was very focused on figuring out how to explain the observables using physics as we know it, specifically Einstein's theory of relativity.

Most people think of Einstein's work as abstract theory. Astrophysicists certainly do. But scientists like Hal don't have that luxury. Sure, they love reveling in the math, but in the end they want to slide the chalkboard into the corner and build something that actually works. Back at Hal's Austin office, Hal and his colleagues had 6,000 square feet of lab space. They were thinkers—and makers. When I visited Hal's lab, he showed me a gravity device he and Eric Davis had built that was so sensitive it would detect the gravity field of an automobile sitting in an adjacent parking lot.

Back in our SCIF, Hal skimmed through his academic paper in which he showed how humans could exploit the empty vacuum of space to provide power and thrust for aircraft. Hal was an expert on the theory of zero-point energy, a holy grail of science that stipulates there is free energy even in the vacuum of space that we can harness. Imagine an energy field that is literally part of the universal fabric of space-time, in the same way that the air around us is not just invisible space, but a very real substrate.

Scientists have long known that space teems with energy, structure, and fields. We had to stop dwelling on how we were limited by the rules that governed space. The time had come to dream of how we could "engineer the vacuum" to serve our needs. If we could exploit the glue holding the universe together, we might be able to forget about electricity and electromagnetism.

This idea has been talked about since the 1990s. Because there are no gas stations in space and the distance between objects is immense, we had to consider non-Newtonian physics. Things like rocket fuel, nuclear propulsion,

and space suits aren't enough to get us across the galaxy, let alone outside our own solar system. If we want to travel long distances, we must tap into some *other* technologies and energy sources to get us where we want to go. The race to Mars is, in a sense, the beginning of that journey. Sticking with rocket fuel is like using a horse and buggy to travel from New York to Los Angeles instead of a 757.

The papers Hal cowrote in the past for us had proposed a new paradigm for interstellar travel. His reasoning was simple: "Hey, look. Someone already figured out how to do the impossible; we might as well too." I couldn't have agreed more. His paper touched on such things as warp drives, traversable wormholes, time machines . . .

It sounded like science fiction, and in a way it was, and still is. The phrase "warp drive" had been cooked up by a sci-fi writer who wrote for pulp fiction magazines in the 1930s. The TV producer Gene Roddenberry swiped those words when he needed a way to explain how the USS *Enterprise* could travel such long distances on his hit show, *Star Trek*. The show brought the concept to the mainstream, and unfortunately trained us all to think the theory was strictly a figment of Hollywood's imagination. In reality, US government research facilities associated with DoD, NASA, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology gave the idea serious consideration.

In Mexico, a young boy named Miguel Alcubierre Moya grew up inspired by *Star Trek*. At age thirty, for his PhD thesis in theoretical physics, Alcubierre, then a student at Cardiff University in Wales, showed how warp drives could work in theory. Years later, Alcubierre would tell a curious fan who wrote him that yes, the words "warp drive" in his very dense academic paper had come directly from *Star Trek* . (The fan was none other than actor William Shatner.) Of course, nothing is that simple in the realm of science. A number of physicists after Alcubierre wrote papers saying, well, warp drives might be *possible*, but they are surely not practical. Others said such a thing would never work at all.

Hal knew this history cold. He was also not a stranger to controversy. Decades ago, his appearance on the cover of *Time* magazine for his role in the Stargate program had already pitched hardened scientists against him.

In 1955, as a nineteen-year-old undergrad studying engineering, Hal was riveted by a series of newspaper articles in the *Miami Herald* about how aviation engineers were exploring the possibility of antigravity aircraft. Could we, as Alcubierre suggested, erase the impact of gravity? And could we, as

Hal—now a man in his late seventies—was contemplating, build aircraft that could fly under such a paradigm?

What would that mean for the people on earth watching such a spacecraft?

What would happen to humans in the presence of such a craft?

How would the world look to the beings aboard that craft?

Hal looked at my team's six observables. He smiled, and picked up his pencil. Later, he would reveal to us his conclusions, but I'm getting ahead of myself again.

Meanwhile, Garry Nolan and Jacques Vallée were talking seriously about collaborating on an academic paper about exotic materials recovered from a UAP crash decades prior. In 1977, on a night close to Christmas, unusual lights were spotted in the skies over Council Bluffs, Iowa. When witnesses ran to where these lights neared the ground, they found not an aircraft but what looked like a small pool of molten metal. Had the craft melted when it hit earth? Had it melted in the air and oozed to the ground? Vallée had obtained materials recovered from this incident. He suspected the multicolored lights seen in the sky by witnesses came from a wobbling craft in distress. When no craft was actually found on the ground, it begged the question: Was the pool of molten metal some sort of by-product of the craft?

After some sightings, researchers had recovered a fine metallic fiber on the ground. They called it "angel hair." I have handled some of this material. It's a little like steel wool. The working theory is that the exteriors of these aircraft are ablative in nature; that is to say, they are capable of self-sacrificing. When the skin of the craft interacts with the propulsion unit, the craft ablates, or peels off, some of its outer surface, resulting in these fibers.

Back in 1977, the Council Bluffs case had undergone an unusually rigorous amount of investigation by local and federal authorities. It was a blue-chip legacy case. Like our *Nimitz* encounter, this civilian event fit the profile of a case that could serve as a model for deeper study. Since 1977, metallurgical technology had improved enormously. Nolan had a battery of instruments in his laboratory that he thought would allow Jacques to get a better understanding of the sample in his possession.

At the same time, Garry was also working with Will to flesh out a program to study the questions raised by Will's patients' circumstances. I got to know Nolan late in his relationship with the project. Though I knew of him and his work with us, he never briefed us at the Pentagon because he was

working directly for Will. We received our updates on this topic from Will and trusted Nolan's competence, completely. The caudate-putamen discovery suggested that they ought to look at the IQs of the patient cohorts in the study—including the experiencers, and the remote viewers. When they did this, the IQs were significantly high. This was a very bright collection of people.

Garry thought it might be smart to investigate the caudate-putamens of other groups of people as well in order to establish a baseline. He set up a project for some graduate students to look at the brain scans of three sets of people—a control group, a group that had diagnosed autism, and those with schizophrenia. Autistic adults and children experience different developmental challenges, but some are savants—a sign of uncanny intelligence that science is only beginning to understand. Schizophrenics, however, often report visions or hallucinations, but in some cases can also be geniuses.

Sure enough, Nolan's team of grads found that autistic people and schizophrenic people both had slight differences from the average person, pathologies, in their caudate-putamens. This may suggest that their seat of intuition was somewhat altered, for better or worse. In fact, some of these individuals may have gifts that allow them to perceive or interpret information that is normally filtered out.

Does this explain why a chess master is a chess master? Can this explain supposed psychic abilities and even remote viewing? If psychic ability really exists, Nolan theorized, it would have to be connected in some way to the caudate-putamen.

And was the caudate-putamen somehow attracting UAP to experiencers? Were remote viewers, like psychics, inhaling and sifting through the world's signals through this so-called antenna in their brains?

Nolan dreamed of doing some DNA studies on the greater question. The way he saw it, the caudate-putamen was the "hardware" that allowed these brains to perform their work. DNA was the blueprint for the hardware. If we could get the right patient permissions and propose the right kind of study, maybe we could pinpoint a gene that predisposed a person to enhanced intuition, psychic ability, and, yes, maybe even UAP attraction.

The arguments for genetic causation were not far-fetched. A Scottish psychologist had traced a gift of premonition through family trees in her home country. In Scotland it was common for a child to inherit his or her father's gift for "second sight." In Native American and Indigenous

traditions, shamanism was embraced openly. It was not regarded as supernatural to commune with nature or wildlife, and to use that experience to guide others to a new state of healing, being, or death. Shamans connected with the spirit world via a trancelike state, sometimes with the aid of psychedelics. Eurocentric cultures, steeped in traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs, were inclined to regard these things as strange, weird, bad, or demonic. But that taboo was nonexistent in Indigenous communities. The practices were socially acceptable. Like I said before, maybe this "gift" was actually an ancient ability shared by many early humans before the proliferation of verbal speech and written language, a vestigial sense left over from primal times, that allowed the species to survive by detecting what dangers lay ahead.

Most interesting to me was Will and Garry's discovery of the connection to Indigenous people of North America. It turned out that almost all the people in Will's studies—military and intelligence officials with remote-viewing abilities and/or UAP encounters and biological effects—had Native American DNA. Specifically, Cherokee blood.

Even more surprising, socializing this revelation led to also discovering that almost everyone who was involved with AATIP had this background as well. I did. Jay did. Hal did. John Robert did. And others as well.

Even stranger, key players on Senate committees, people who were very active in this topic, turned out to have Cherokee blood.

Was all this a bizarre coincidence?

My mom inherited Cherokee blood from her family in Kentucky. Was it by design that I was in this job in the first place? Was it even my choice, or was it simply fate?

I now began to question quite a bit. Not just remote viewing, not just UAP, but the very construct of our reality.

Do you think the ants in the ant farm *know* they are in an ant farm and following paths designed for them? And that no matter how hard they try, they will never be able to move in more than two dimensions, even though they exist in a three-dimensional world?

CHAPTER 15

USS *ROOSEVELT*

In 2015, Jay received a string of emails from senior leaders with the Navy's Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk, Virginia. The emails provided details of UAP incursions involving the aircraft carrier USS *Roosevelt*. He forwarded the email to me and called me to discuss the events. The carrier had already embarked on a ten-month deployment to the Persian Gulf. It turns out that during pre-deployment workups in late 2014, in the waters off Virginia and all the way down to Florida, the aircrew had twenty-two separate encounters with UAP. The Hornets aboard the carrier had recently undergone upgrades to improve radar systems that dated, in some cases, to the 1980s. Thinking these may only be artifacts or some other issue with the new highly sensitive radars, the pilots investigated and validated with their eyes and other sensors. There were *scores* of UAP operating in exclusive-use airspace, where no aircraft are authorized to fly besides US military aircraft.

Most of these UAP were small. Because of their location and their boldness, our personnel assumed at first that they were drones or probes operated by some classified US military program. Maybe the Navy had gotten its wires crossed with a top secret endeavor testing new equipment. Was that possible? We had processes to rule out that option, and it was ruled out quickly.

The military and its aerospace partners tend to avoid testing new equipment near pilots who haven't been briefed on new technology. We have tons of remote secure airspace that is designated for this so-called blue-on-blue testing, and it is never done unannounced. There's never any need to unroll top secret tech in the presence of personnel who have not been cleared. It's too complicated, too sloppy, and too dangerous. You could easily lose prototypes that cost you millions to construct. Worst-case scenario, you could get pilots killed.

As I sat digesting the email and my call with Jay, I pushed my mind to consider all the details. The situation had all the hallmarks of the *Nimitz/Princeton* case back in 2004. Like the *Nimitz*, the *Roosevelt* was a nuclear-powered vessel. Two of the boxes were ticked: water and nukes. The classic UAP combo. It also appeared that the UAP were being provocative. According to witnesses, this was a protracted event, lasting not days, but *months*.

Pilots and radar operators observed these objects and grew increasingly concerned. The crew reported the UAP displayed the same abilities that dazzled the *Nimitz* and *Princeton* crews a decade earlier. Some flew alone, while others flew in a synchronized formation, not unlike the video I provided Neill Tipton of the three objects flying in formation. If not the exact same technology, I was sure it was related. The objects would change elevation from 30,000 feet down to sea level in the blink of an eye. They would stop in midair, then shoot away in a different direction. Some were small, the size of a beach ball, while others were much larger. We also received reports of luminous underwater craft that illuminated in an eerie green glow while following our ships. There seemed to be a variety of shapes and sizes, and all seemed interested in our fleet.

In one instance two Hornets embarked on an exercise that required them to fly within one hundred feet of each other. Tight formations are critical in combat to control the airspace and keep a close eye on your wingman. Without warning, an object flew right toward the Hornets, zipped right between their wings, and disappeared. As the pilot told me, the UAP "split their formation."

The worst situation for any pilot, a near collision.

The object drew close enough to the cockpits that both pilots saw it clearly. It was a transparent orb or sphere; inside it was a cube. The four points of the cube touched the inner circumference of the sphere. Truly bizarre.

When the pilots returned to the *Roosevelt*, some were shaken and concerned, and a few were terrified. As news of the encounter spread, the other pilots became increasingly angry. A UAP the size of a beach ball may seem small, but it only takes a small bird to stall a jet engine and bring down a plane. Navy brass was concerned and so were we.

And for what? It couldn't have been a civilian drone. It was too far out and too far up. The UAP they'd been seeing recently had the ability to fly for

more than twelve hours at a time without needing to refuel, recharge, or be recalled. Furthermore, there wasn't any obvious staging area to launch or recover drones.

Someone speculated that it could have been an inflatable radar reflector, used for training and navigation, but balloons don't travel against a head wind and normally don't fly in a coordinated formation. This was not an inflatable radar reflector. The squadron filed safety reports, hoping to spark an investigation. During this period, numerous similar reports were filed through the Navy, in various operating areas worldwide, complaining of similar near disasters with UAP. The language in those reports is strikingly similar. At some point in the document, you would find a high-ranking official assert, "This is very dangerous. This could have caused a midair collision and threatened the lives of our aviators." The incidents had become so numerous that they could no longer be ignored.

The authors of these reports hoped that their stern warning would somehow filter up to the presumed operators of top secret programs who, they believed, had recklessly put their people in danger. Most of them did not or could not contemplate the possibility of off-world technologies. Ones who did carefully couched their language in generalities, hoping that an open-minded person in charge would notice. This ultimately led the senior intelligence officer at Fleet Forces Command to reach out to Jay, who, in his role with naval intelligence on the Navy staff in the Pentagon, would be the appropriate front door for initiating a larger investigation, which Jay did with the full support of his leadership.

Back in the Pentagon, we were trying our best to investigate these incidents involving the *Roosevelt*. But it was as if we were back at square one.

"So, what are these unidentified things?" one of our meeting partners would ask innocently.

We'd respond, "Well . . . they're unidentified. That's the point. Look—these things are out over the Atlantic near Virginia. That means they are operating minutes from downtown DC. Minutes by air from the White House and the Capitol."

"But if we don't know what they are, why should we worry about them?"

Believe it or not, that was the message of Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall III. In an interview with *CBS Mornings* on September 8, 2022, he acknowledged the reality of UAP, but when asked specifically if UFOs are an

issue for him, Kendall stated, “Not really. I have real threats that I worry about every day.” This is like saying to someone that a nuclear sub has been found sitting in the Potomac River but because we can’t tell who it belongs to, it’s not of any concern. I don’t think you need to be a genius to grasp that such a rationale is deeply flawed. A threat is a threat is a threat. If trained military observers report trouble in restricted airspace and ask for help, you have to treat it as a concern.

But this is classic Pentagon thinking in action: Tell me why we should care. Better yet, prove it. If these UAP had, say, a Russian star on the wing, or a North Korean tail number, then at least we would know who we are dealing with. But these UAP didn’t have wings or a tail at all, and so it was crickets all the way through the chain of command.

It reminded me of a story I’d heard of the Spanish conquistadors arriving in the New World. Some scholars argue that the Inca did not recognize the technology and therefore had no frame of reference to understand or appreciate what they were seeing. The armored soldiers on horseback arriving on the beaches may as well have been gods. This led to miscommunications and a failure to report the invading force to Inca war chiefs. The rest is history.

Was the same thing happening all over again with the US government? Was the fact that we don’t recognize these UAP as the technology of a known foe preventing us from doing anything about it? Again, if these objects were Russian or Chinese, the story would be instant news on every network. But it wasn’t. If this were Russian or Chinese, we would have immediately scrambled interceptors and challenged the incursion. But we didn’t. If this were Russian or Chinese, we would have collected data on it. But we couldn’t. And as frustrated as I was with the Navy, at least the Navy had the guts to report the incidents.

The Army had their incidents too. The year before, an Army Patriot missile battery tracked multiple bogies on their radar that seemed to achieve speeds of 6,000 miles per hour. During my time working Army investigations, I was aware of one such report that was later opened by the Army under the watchful eye of the then director of counterintelligence. But where were all the other reports? As for the Air Force, they were missing in action as usual. According to the Air Force, UAP don’t exist, so why investigate them?

I was accustomed to this response by now, but it still made me furious.

We had worked hard over the last few years to cultivate relationships with personnel who would turn to us first when they spotted UAP. This was a live investigation that was happening in real time. We had told our correspondent not to worry. The cavalry was coming.

Based on these twenty-two UAP incidents involving the *Roosevelt* Carrier Strike Group, with eyewitnesses and video evidence, we knew we needed a robust plan of action. Jay spent weeks creating an operation plan (OPLAN), code-named "Interloper." It was a classic "honey pot." We would orchestrate a situation that was so irresistible and almost impossible for the enemy to ignore. With each new iteration of the OPLAN, Jay inserted more data in the proposal to bolster our argument. Dates, times, locations, call signs, and the ship names of all vessels that had UAP encounters. Jay also included radar data that substantiated the eyewitness testimonies of flustered pilots and aircrew. The Interloper document painted a very persuasive picture to whoever read it.

Unfortunately, by this time my friend Michael Higgins was no longer DIA's director of operations and was on to his new assignment. His replacement was a man whom I did not trust named Garry Reid (no relation to our congressional benefactor, Senator Harry Reid). He had been brought to the OUSD(I) from the special operations community. I'd originally looked up to him but soon saw his propensity for favoritism and chauvinism. Collectively, he and his cronies reduced OUSD(I) to tatters, besieged by low morale and poor management. They spent more time trying to outmaneuver each other than outmaneuvering real enemies, foreign and domestic, and it was all at the expense of our workforce. Employees would soon file charges with the DoD inspector general about some of his behavior. The DoD's Inspector General's Office went on to investigate Reid on numerous allegations, including maintaining a sexual relationship with a subordinate employee, sexual harassment, and fostering a hostile work environment.

The IG's Office would eventually conclude that Reid had violated Joint Ethics Regulations by creating an appearance of an inappropriate relationship or preferential treatment with a female subordinate and mishandling of Controlled Unclassified Information.

More on this later, but the bottom line: I knew right away I could not trust him, and he was unfortunately my senior rater and boss. The chain of command had been corrupted.

To move Interloper along, Jay and I circumvented the usual channels in

favor of an ACCM process. That means the operation plan would be submitted to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We were hoping to get around the OUSD(I) because the entire organization had become infested with compromised individuals. I no longer trusted my chain of command with anything sensitive, let alone with UAP information.

Jay had introduced me to the new Navy Controlled Access Program (CAP) manager, who was a friend of his. A GS-14 at the time, ******** was a seasoned intelligence officer. ******** soon became a trusted part of our team and was particularly savvy in navigating the forest of classification systems. In fact, I think it was ********* idea in the first place to coordinate Interloper through the Joint Chiefs.

******** was exactly the type of guy we needed on the team, and Jay had once again found us a great team member.

For weeks after, Jay and now ******** would reach out each time we received a fresh infusion of images or data, assuring our people at sea that we were continuing to press the matter. We felt good about receiving regular updates from the field and provided the field with encouragement that a solution was soon forthcoming. Still, we did not want the bureaucracy to make liars out of us. We did not want to promise the field that the AATIP cavalry was coming to solve their problems, only to realize that the cavalry could not be bothered to saddle up.

Jay and ******** busily coordinated Interloper with the Joint Staff and all seemed to be well on track. The NSA and CIA offered to provide assets as well, and we launched weekly meetings in the SCIF spaces we had available. Some of these meetings occurred at the Pentagon, while others were held at other agencies. With OUSD(I) now out of the picture, I believed we stood a good chance of reinvigorating AATIP.

The plan for Interloper was to use one of our nuclear-powered carrier strike groups as bait. We would pick a designated spot in the Atlantic and drop in a huge nuclear footprint, one irresistible to “our friends from out of town” as they were later called. Nuclear-powered carriers, nuclear-powered destroyers, nuclear-capable assets, nuclearpowered submarines—all in the same vicinity within a huge body of water. The trap would now be set. Nukes and water—irresistible. Our partner agencies would allocate hidden collection assets in the vicinity. When the UAP showed up to investigate our maneuvers, the trap would spring shut. We would then focus all our

intelligence assets on data collection. The details of the technology we'd use remain classified, but they were capable, to say the least. The logistics of such an operation were daunting but achievable. After all, carrier groups routinely traveled together in this fashion.

One morning during this whole process, our email inbox rewarded us with two videos we received in a bath of data from Fleet Forces Command. Both videos had been taken from the air by pilots in the *Roosevelt* Carrier Strike Group, using the same sort of ATFLIR pod that Commander Fravor's squadron had used to capture the 2004 Tic Tac video.

The object in one of the videos also resembled a Tic Tac, at least in the sense that it was rounded, smooth, and egg-shaped. But where the 2004 Tic Tac was more than 40 feet long, this object—in the video that would later become famously known as GoFast—was no more than about 18 feet long, tops. That's smaller than a Piper Cub, an aircraft built for bush pilots and recreational fliers. A Cub is lightweight, about 765 pounds, and flies no faster than 90 miles per hour.

"Whoa, got it! Whoo-hoooo!"

Another voice, most likely the pilot, says, "What the f—is that thing?"

Someone else, probably the radar operator witnessing this event from aboard the *Roosevelt*, chimes in: "Did you box a moving target?"

"No," the Weapon Systems Operator (WSO) replies. "It's in auto track."

"Oh—okay. Oh my gosh, dude!"

"What is that, man?"

"Look at that thing flying!"

The object moves from the top right to the lower left of the screen. There's no plume of exhaust, no wings, no propellers. Just a speedy little egg out for a jaunt above the ocean. At the time, no one in DoD or the IC could explain it. After several years of analysis, however, later researchers would claim that the object was going much slower than previously thought. This effect is called a parallax. I still don't agree with this assessment, since the pilots who witnessed the object flying marveled at its speed.

The second film would become world-famous years later by the name GIMBAL. It was slightly more intriguing because of the object's unusual flight behavior. When the film was shot, the pilots had just encountered a fleet of five UAP in their airspace. They managed to lock the camera on just one of these objects and watched as it flew from right to left of the screen.

In the video, the object looks elongated and white. But that color is

somewhat misleading. Since the camera is in infrared mode, white merely indicates that the object is “cold”—no heat emanating from the aircraft at all.

Once again, you hear the astonished, profanity-laced banter of the pilots and whoever else is viewing the video as it’s being recorded live.

“It’s a f—in’ drone, bro,” someone says.

“Look, there’s a whole fleet of them! Look on the [radar].”

“My gosh!”

“It’s damn sure not a drone,” someone else responds.

“They’re all going against the wind! The wind is 120 knots out of the west.”

At this point in the video, the WSO switches the camera mode. Suddenly everything in the image pulls into better resolution. You can practically hear the pilots gasp.

“Look at that thing, bro!”

Staring them in the face is what looks like a stereotypical flying saucer out of some 1950s-era movie. The object is lenticular, with a bulge on its top and bottom. The object is now black, which in this camera mode also indicates that the object is “cold”—no heat signature.

The words of the pilots are a little garbled here.

“That’s not [unclear], though, is it?”

“That’s an [unclear].”

Then the UAP slows, parks itself in the air, and begins to shift. The bulge on top swings from left to right, and now the bulge on its bottom faces the wind. At one point the object flies perpendicular to the oncoming wind, yet it doesn’t bend or tilt from the resistance. It’s impervious to the atmosphere. It bends only when *it* wants to.

“Look at that thing!” a pilot says.

“It’s rotating!”

The clip ends shortly after.

I must have watched that video twenty times before Jay called me. “Are you seeing this?” he said, incredulous.

At 120 knots, the wind speed the pilots clocked is equivalent to 138-mile-per-hour winds. (Weather forecasters warn you to tie up loose furniture on your patio when local wind gusts approach 50–60 miles per hour.) By the way, balloons travel with the prevailing wind, not against it. Yet this object—which is heatless, wingless, and propeller-less, and spews no exhaust—parks itself at 20,000 feet in the sky and calmly flips itself over in winds that would

be classified as a Category 4 hurricane on earth. It doesn't even flutter or rattle like a kite. This again reminded me of the previous investigation of "balloons" splitting the formation of fighter aircraft off the coast of Virginia. Balloons can't do that.

When we brought the video into meetings with some team members and interagency friends, we watched as they marched through a predictable series of reactions. First was careful observance of the evidence. Then came a checking of the facts. Wait—what's the altitude? What did they say the speed was? Then shock, amazement, wonder, followed by spirited arguments. Without hesitation we knew we would use both videos to reinforce OPLAN Interloper.

We had more than one ulterior motive up our sleeves.

In the backs of our minds, we were still thinking about that aerospace firm that denied us access to the materials of nonhuman origin that they had. I was beginning to wonder if we could go directly to the secretary of defense. Surely, I thought, the aerospace firm would accept a letter from the highest-ranking figure in the Pentagon. If we could get a letter from the SECDEF, that should trump anyone in the Air Force from trying to stymie our efforts. Given my work directing the Guantanamo Bay portfolio, I had routine access to the secretary's senior staff but not the secretary himself or his direct minders. For this another person would be needed, someone with access to levels above God. Someone who knew everybody and everything. Until I identified the right person, we were stuck working within the system.

A while back I had shared the Predator video with Neill Tipton, who was also a liaison for the folks that worked the Army Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Task Force. Neill was a "techie" and knew the world of ISR probably better than anyone. If what we were seeing in the video was a supersecret US platform, Neill would know. Though fascinated by the evidence before him, Neill had no clue what it could be.

I believed him because he was echoing what our aviation experts had told us. I trusted Neill and he'd shown himself to be a good leader and a sharp thinker. If I cultivated more allies like him, I'd be in good shape to land additional technical support for Interloper.

A few months later I was sitting in a room with high-level Navy officials, CIA reps, and someone from the NSA. After the usual exchange of pleasantries and some backslapping, we rolled the tapes.

The room went silent when we showed the GIMBAL video. What made

GIMBAL so perplexing was the fact the object never lost altitude as it turned 90 degrees. Like magic, it remained in place. If a human-built aircraft did what this object did in the video, it would immediately lose altitude because the wings are creating lift disproportionately. In this case, however, the object seemed to hover at an altitude of 20,000 feet and linger there, eerily. Skeptics would later suggest that the object was a balloon, but this was certainly not the case.

One of our meeting attendees made an uncomfortable joke that this thing seemed to be showing us what it could do, mocking us, as if to say, “Hey guys, watch this!”

Of course, we do have vehicles that can hover, but not in this fashion, and not at that altitude, and not in that headwind. Whatever this was, it was not conventional technology and not ours. It was something different. To be clear, no one in that room thought this UAP was made by humans.

This unnerved, mystified, and concerned our team of aviation and optical experts. Was this some sort of breakaway technology? Did an adversary figure something out that we hadn’t? Despite the billions of dollars we spent on intelligence each year, somehow, someone slipped through the cracks of our multidisciplined intelligence architecture and developed a superior technology completely in the dark. It was an unsettling proposition for all who attended the meeting.

The GIMBAL maneuvered in a way that reminded me of the old Apollo 11 lunar module, which was about as aerodynamic as a dishwasher. It didn’t have to be because it operated in the near-vacuum of space, where it encountered zero wind resistance. As a result, it didn’t need wings. Yet, in vintage NASA footage you can find online of docking maneuvers, as the lunar module approaches the lunar orbiter for its rendezvous “hookup,” it begins to ratchet itself into position, making small adjustments with its thrusters as it gets closer to the orbiter. If you compare that maneuver to the way in which the object in the GIMBAL video rotates, you will see an uncanny resemblance. This *may* suggest that whatever is in the GIMBAL video is *also* operating in a vacuum environment, creating a bubble around itself so the effects of atmospheric resistance are moot. Was that the reason a slight aura can be seen around the GIMBAL object? Was this a protective bubble? Was this an artifact of the propulsion unit?

In our meeting, I watched as a rep from the CIA shook his head, then launched into a half-assed exploration of the possibilities. “The only way I

see this being even remotely possible is if you had a . . . hybrid balloon with some sort of inducted fan at its center," he said, not quite believing his own words. "Perhaps it is some sort of Mylar football that has its own navigation and propulsion."

I kept my mouth shut just to see where this was going.

His eyes boggled as he tried to keep track of his own tortured logic. The mental gymnastics were herculean.

Balloons. Inducted fans. Mylar football. Right.

"What about fuel and loiter capability? This thing is way out in the middle of nowhere," I said.

His response was even more comical. "Um . . . perhaps they are using some sort of tether or beamed energy to give it power, you know? Like a floating platform nearby."

This thing was smack in the middle of the ocean. The object itself was indicated as being very hot; however, the air surrounding it was very cold. It didn't make any sense.

He let out an awkward chuckle with apologetic eyes. I felt bad for him, because we'd all been there. The GIMBAL was a great, glittering mystery. On the observables scale, it was clearly an antigravity device. Everything the video showed, the pilots backed up with eyewitness testimony.

When the meeting adjourned and we went our separate ways, I had occasion to flip through the images again, frame by frame. My eyes always came to rest on that weird little bubble. Was it some sort of illusion or effect produced by the camera? According to the CIA, it was not. It was not an artifact of the camera nor a lens flare. Whatever it was, it was real.

You had to wonder: if the aura was novel, then was it possibly a clue to the propulsion system of the UAP? To get the truth, we had to pierce that bubble. And we would, sooner than I'd ever imagined.

CHAPTER 16

THE “AHA” MOMENT

I’d just returned from an international work trip when I learned that our friend Hal was in town and visiting the Pentagon. He had news to share and was waiting for us in a SCIF.

When I arrived, I found other team members with eyes on Hal, who stood at a whiteboard, writing one of the longest mathematical equations I had ever seen. The equation already took up two full white-boards and he wasn’t done. The pungent smell of the dry-erase marker filled the conference room.

Finally, Hal finished the equation, then wrote the observables down, and read them out loud as he checked each off.

Hypersonic velocities? *Check.* Instantaneous acceleration? *Check.* Low observability? *Check.* Transmedium travel? *Check.* Antigravity? *Check.* Biological effects? *Check.*

Hal smiled and proudly said, “One breakthrough technology could be responsible for everything. All of it. And we may have just figured out how it works.”

We all leaned in . . . speechless.

Up to this point, our government had spent an insane amount of effort over many years trying to identify the specific exotic technologies that could explain each of the observables. In fact, many of the academic studies that were previously commissioned by the DIA and resulted in the Defense Intelligence Research Documents (DIRDs) had all focused on individual technologies which tried to explore and explain UAP performance. It seemed Hal had managed to find a unifying theory of sorts. Never did we consider the obvious question: “Were the observables all a product of a *single* technology?”

The answer seemed to be a resounding yes.

Hal explained that it turns out “if we had the right technology, we could

warp space and time in a localized area, creating a localized ‘bubble’ around a craft.”

Inside the bubble, one would experience space and time differently than someone outside the bubble . . . like a diving bell, which protects a diver from the crushing depths around them.

How is this bubble created?

“In theory, there are only two ways to warp space-time: a lot of mass, or a heck of a lot of energy.” A smile crept to his face. He added, “An obscene amount of energy.”

Mass and energy have a very special relationship. We know this thanks to Einstein’s theory of relativity, $E = mc^2$. You can think of mass and energy as fundamentally the same thing but in two different states. Like ice and steam —both are made of water, but they are in different energetic states.

Obviously, UAP are not using large amounts of mass to warp space-time. They’d have to bring something bigger than the size of earth to earth. The results would be catastrophic, like parking a stellar black hole next to earth . . . and we would have noticed that.

So that leaves the second way: energy. With enough energy, in theory, one could create a bubble that warps space-time around a craft.

“If someone had the technology to create a warp bubble around a vehicle, they would be able to traverse the universe much more quickly than any known technology allows,” he said.“The speed of light has always been considered the universal speed limit. However, it is theoretically possible that with a sufficient amount of energy, a vehicle could compress the space in front of you while stretching it behind you. If you had the technology to do that, you could achieve—or begin to achieve—faster-than-light travel.

“Those observables you gave me? Every one of them works with Einstein’s theory. With general relativity. Hand in glove. It’s not magic, Lue. It’s physics.”

I was reminded of the Arthur C. Clarke quote, “Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”

Hal said, “It is no longer a theoretical challenge; it is now a technological challenge.”

The equation was key to Hal’s conclusion.

Astronomers typically look at the speed of light as a universal constant. But what if the space in which light travels could be compressed or expanded? We already know space-time is flexible, and in some extreme

cases like a cosmic black hole, space-time can be unimaginably squeezed and distorted. Space and time are inextricably connected; you can't have one without the other. The two are as inseparable as an old married couple, but they are also flexible. As the density of matter increases, so do the forces of gravity. When that occurs, it warps space and time.

The military is accustomed to dealing with the slight fluctuations or "atomic drift" of atomic cesium clocks located aboard satellites. Over time, those run at a slightly different rate than the clocks at the Air Force ground stations. Periodically, the clocks must be recalibrated.

Here's what Einstein taught us: time slows the closer you travel toward a source of gravity. The same holds true the faster you approach the speed of light. Earth is our source of gravity. It's like a magnet that pulls us *down*.

The birds in the sky over your head "experience" time infinitesimally faster than you do on the ground. That's because they are farther from earth's surface than we are. It's a minuscule amount, but it's true. The same is true if you were on a bullet train speeding along the tracks. In theory, if you can go fast enough and long enough, you may add an extra second or two to your life span. If you are near a black hole, where the mass is millions of times greater, time slows to such a rate that you may live thousands of years beyond your life span. Unfortunately, the crushing effects of the black hole would likely turn you into spaghetti first. And if you survive that, you wouldn't have anyone to talk about it with because everyone you knew on earth would be dead.

Now imagine that you were able to engineer space to your needs. Imagine you were able to enclose your aircraft in a bubble that renders it immune from the effects of gravity. You could now fly without wings because you no longer need lift. And you wouldn't need jet engines or propellers because you would no longer need to generate forward airspeed. The way we experience time on earth would no longer be relevant because you would be insulated from earth's time and gravity.

I remembered that a bubble around an aircraft was *exactly* what we'd seen in the GIMBAL video . . . and others.

If you had that bubble in place, Hal continued, suddenly the effect of relativity is altered, shifted. A human on the ground and the occupant inside the cockpit of a UAP each experience time slightly differently.

The beings (or whatever) piloting the craft experience time normally *for them*. The UAP is flying at a speed that seems normal for its occupants. In

fact, if UAP pilots were to peer out of their aircraft, they would see an earth that is moving in slow motion relative to themselves.

Meanwhile, on the ground, time ticks by slower for you and me, due to gravity being somewhat stronger. We look up at this shining disc and it is flying impossibly, magically fast. When that aircraft turns, the effect appears precipitous to us human viewers. Inside the aircraft, it's just a normal turn or change in elevation. The pilot's body doesn't feel the impact of those g-forces because they are experiencing space-time differently in their bubble. Some scientists will say that the warping of space-time by earth's mass is minuscule and therefore time is not that different than time inside the bubble —that is, unless the bubble is like the Alcubierre warp bubble described earlier.

Think back to Commander Dave Fravor flying that F/A-18 Hornet as he circled down to confront the Tic Tac off the coast of San Diego. The Tic Tac glided over the top of the Hornet's nose and disappeared. A near miss! But was it, really? To the Tic Tac, Fravor's Hornet was moving like molasses. The flying lozenge had *plenty* of time to swoop around.

I want to be clear: I am not describing an optical illusion. I am not saying the UAP merely *looks* as if it is flying impossibly fast. It is *absolutely* flying quickly in *our* space-time.

Two different realities in one place at the same time.

How is such a thing possible?

But how does this relate to low observability, one of our observables? All light is subject to gravity. When light from a faraway star passes through a large galaxy on its way to earth, the light is bent through a process called gravitational lensing.

Hal gave us this analogy: "If you ever look at a koi fish in an outdoor garden pond, water bends sunlight, causing a distortion of what you see. The koi appear distorted and wavy. We know they are not, but they appear that way. If you go to scoop the fish out with a net, you'll find that it is not where you think it is. When the water or light turns a certain way, the fish might well disappear from view entirely."

The bubble around the UAP distorts the way light and other electromagnetic emanations interact with the UAP inside the bubble. The frequency of light that enters the bubble is not the same as what gets reflected back to the outside observer. Space-time is different inside the bubble than outside, like the koi fish in the pond analogy, but instead of water, it's a warp

bubble, and instead of light simply bending, the frequency of light is changed. The UAP in this case *is* the koi in the pond. So it's not surprising that every time someone tries to take a photo of a UAP, it's all fuzzy and obscure, because it's like taking a photograph through a barrier, like if you were trying to take a picture of a fish underwater from above water.

This is why electromagnetic radiation, like radar, often has trouble tracking these UAP. If someone outside the bubble were to shoot a radar beam at the bubble, the radar beam that enters the bubble is not necessarily at the same frequency that is reflected back to the radar collector.

Light behaves differently depending upon the amount of gravity or energy it has to travel through. Sunlight alone is not capable of igniting your wooden patio furniture while you're sunbathing. But if you take a magnifying glass and focus a tiny beam of sunlight at that wood, suddenly you see a curl of smoke. The wood will indeed ignite. If an ant happens to wander into that focused beam, it will be incinerated. Why? Because you *engineered* the sunlight with your magnifying glass. In essence, the poor ant has wandered from one reality (sunlight can't hurt me) into a second reality of focused energy (ouch).

Scientists plot all the different types of light and their radiation levels on a scale known as the electromagnetic spectrum. It helps to think of the scale as a rainbow. Notice: there's a red side of the spectrum and a blue side.

When light bends through a magnifying glass, it is focusing the light to a central point, increasing its intensity. UV and infrared (IR) light straddle visible light on the spectrum. The wavelength of light can also be stretched and compressed, giving us the colors of the rainbow.

As light from a star moves *away* from earth, its wavelength is elongated in what is known as a Doppler red shift. As the distance to earth from a star *decreases*, the light wave experiences a compression known as a blue shift. In most cases, shifts can be measured, aiding our ability to determine the rate at which the universe is expanding or contracting.

Gravitational lensing and the red shift/blue shift paradigm may explain why objects in the bubble appear strange and difficult to describe.

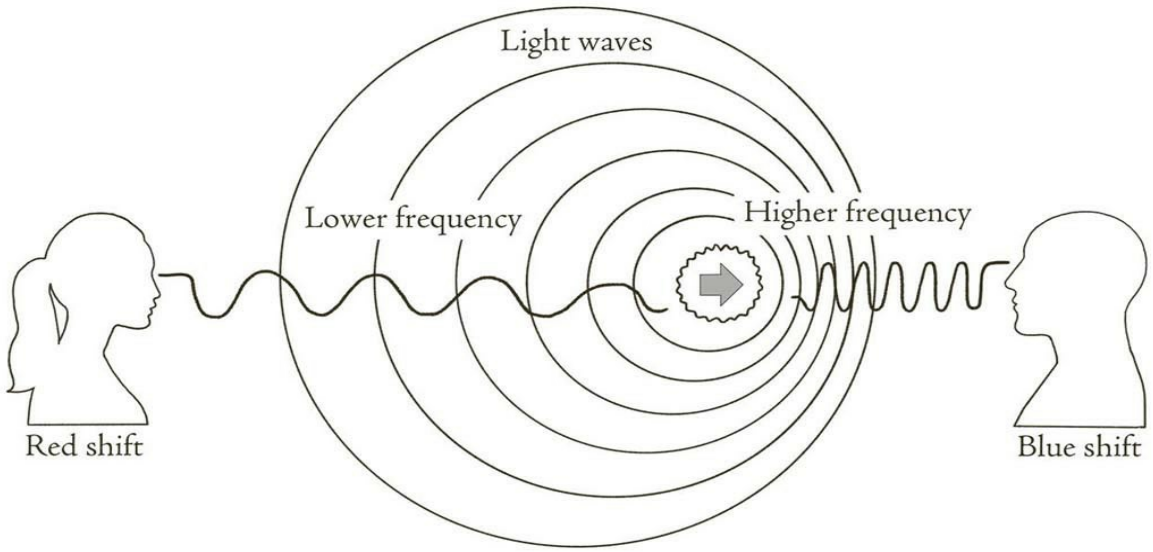
Until recently, most scientists postulated that gravity was an immutable field or force. Now, some propose the notion that gravity is actually a wave. If that's true, then perhaps gravity can be manipulated like other waves such as X-rays or microwaves or radio waves. Hal was proposing that our friends from out of town have decoded the mysteries of gravity and have built

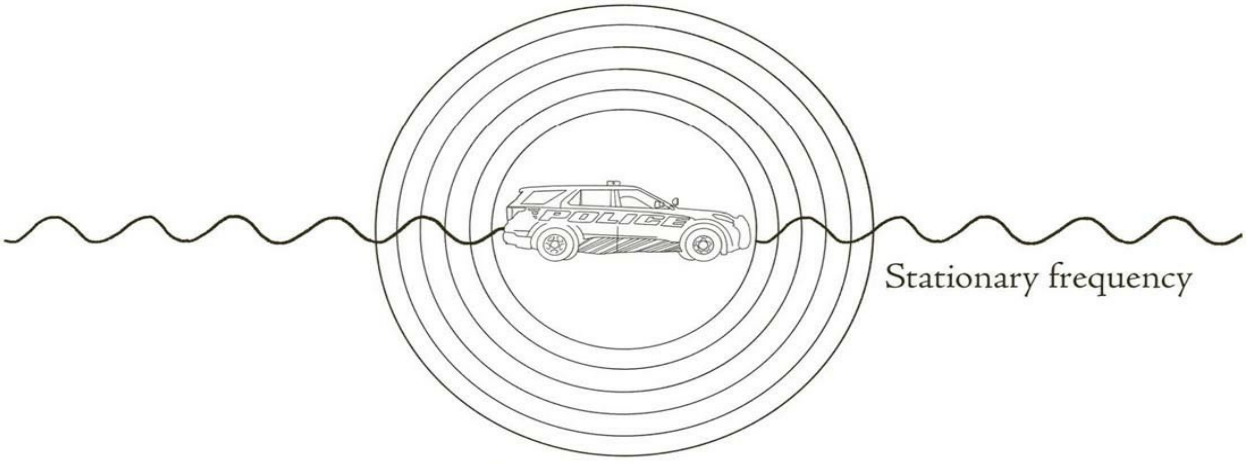
themselves a warp drive. The craft generates a bubble. The bubble encapsulates the craft, insulating it from the local space-time environment. The result would be all six of the observables.

Instantaneous Acceleration: The bubble allows the craft inside to perform maneuvers that seem impossible. Inside the bubble, the g-forces are minimal because space and time are experienced differently than outside the bubble.

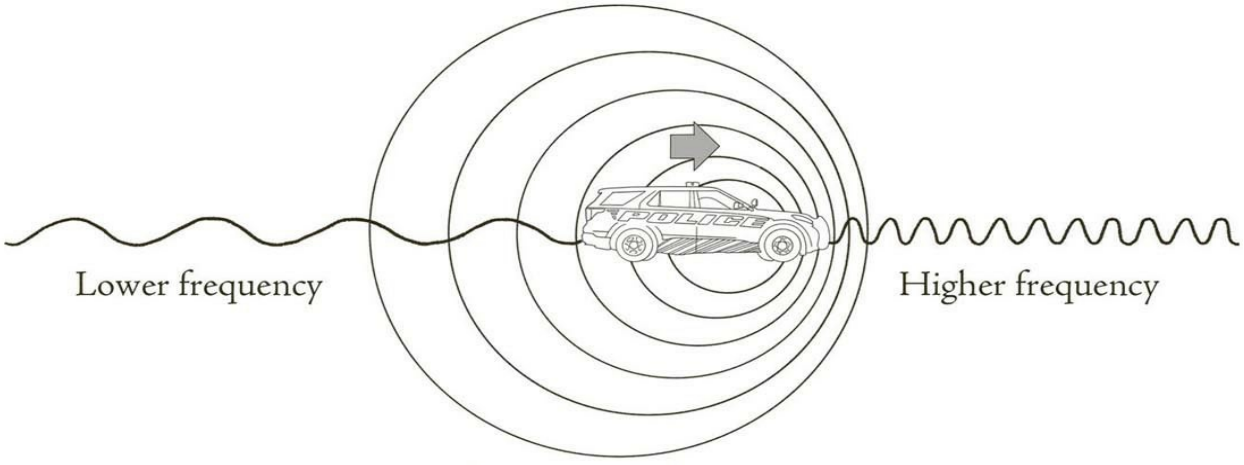
Hypersonic Velocity: The bubble allows the craft to travel at incredible speeds to the outside observer, but inside the bubble, speeds may not be much faster than a leisurely stroll. Time goes by quicker for the craft inside the bubble than for those observing it from outside.

DOPPLER EFFECT





Static sound source



Moving sound source

Low Observability: The bubble distorts light and other electrooptical waves trying to penetrate its perimeter, enhancing distortion and creating a gravitational lensing effect. It acts as a barrier between two space-time environments that eliminates or conceals most of the known signatures of technology.

Transmedium Travel: The bubble eliminates any friction or resistance from the outside atmosphere the craft is traveling through. The same holds true for water and space. The craft itself is always moving within in its own space-time bubble. The environment it's traveling through is inconsequential to the craft inside the bubble, similar to a diving bell underwater, where the environment inside the diving bell is protected from the environment outside the diving bell.

Antigravity: Earth's gravity is no longer having an effect on the craft inside the bubble, which is why the craft does not need an engine, wings, or associated technology to "fly."

What about biological effects? Why are witnesses harmed when they approach or touch these craft? It's exactly the same thing as the magnifying glass and the ant. When you bend or shift one band of the spectrum into another, you increase the potential for damaging radiation. In this situation, one may expect normal light waves inside the bubble to be blue-shifted to the soft X-ray band, outside the bubble. Occupants inside the bubble are safe, but anyone outside the bubble could be in peril.

In essence, any form of radiation, like heat or infrared, or regular light, gets shifted to a much higher frequency upon transiting or leaving the bubble. This blue shift explains why some describe UAP as being highly luminous. Infrared light, or heat, which you can't see, would be blueshifted into the visible light spectrum, making UAP look bright.

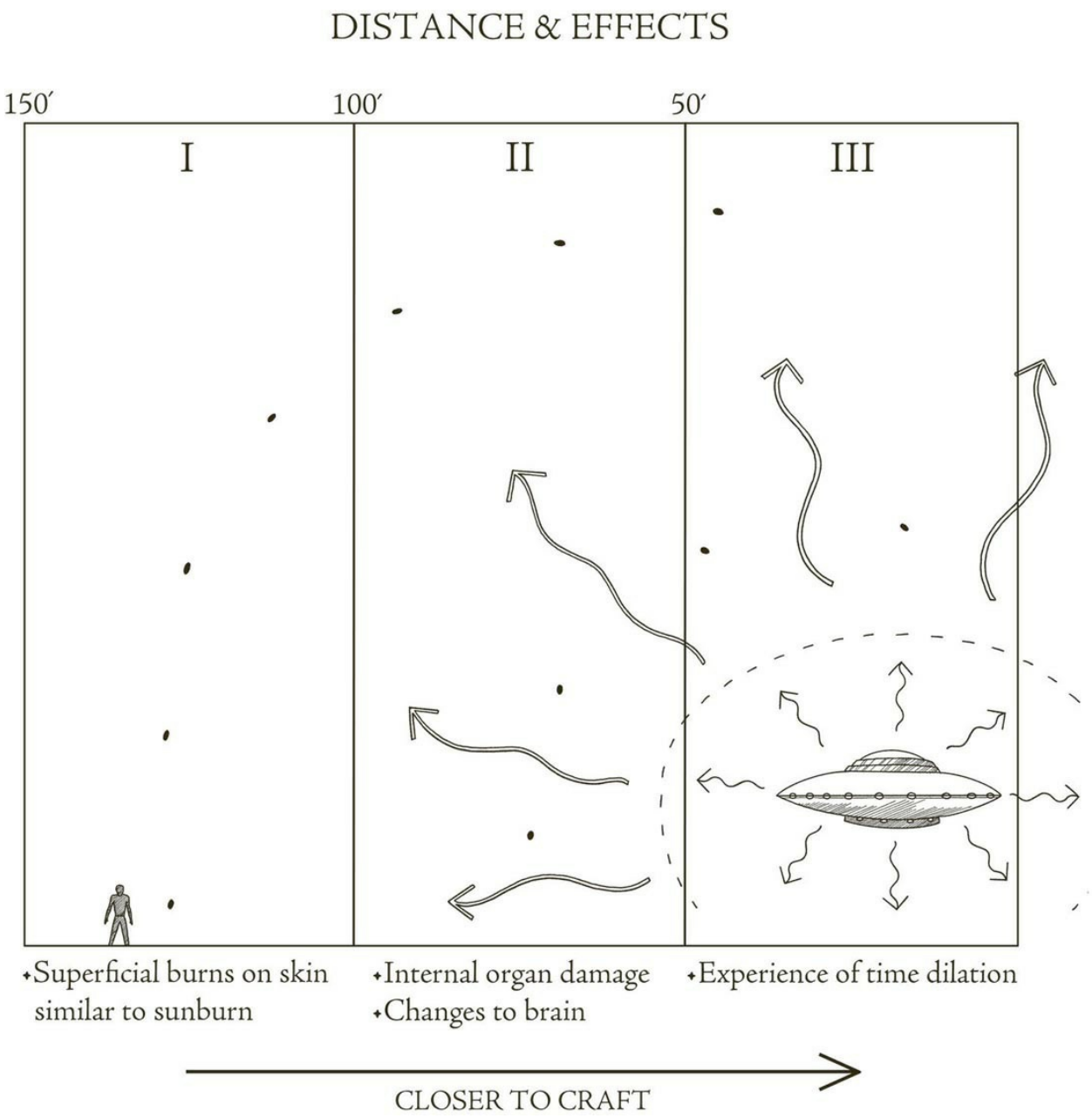
This would also generate a highly energetic wave that could cause a dramatic sunburn, and in some cases damage human tissues and organs. Think of gamma rays.

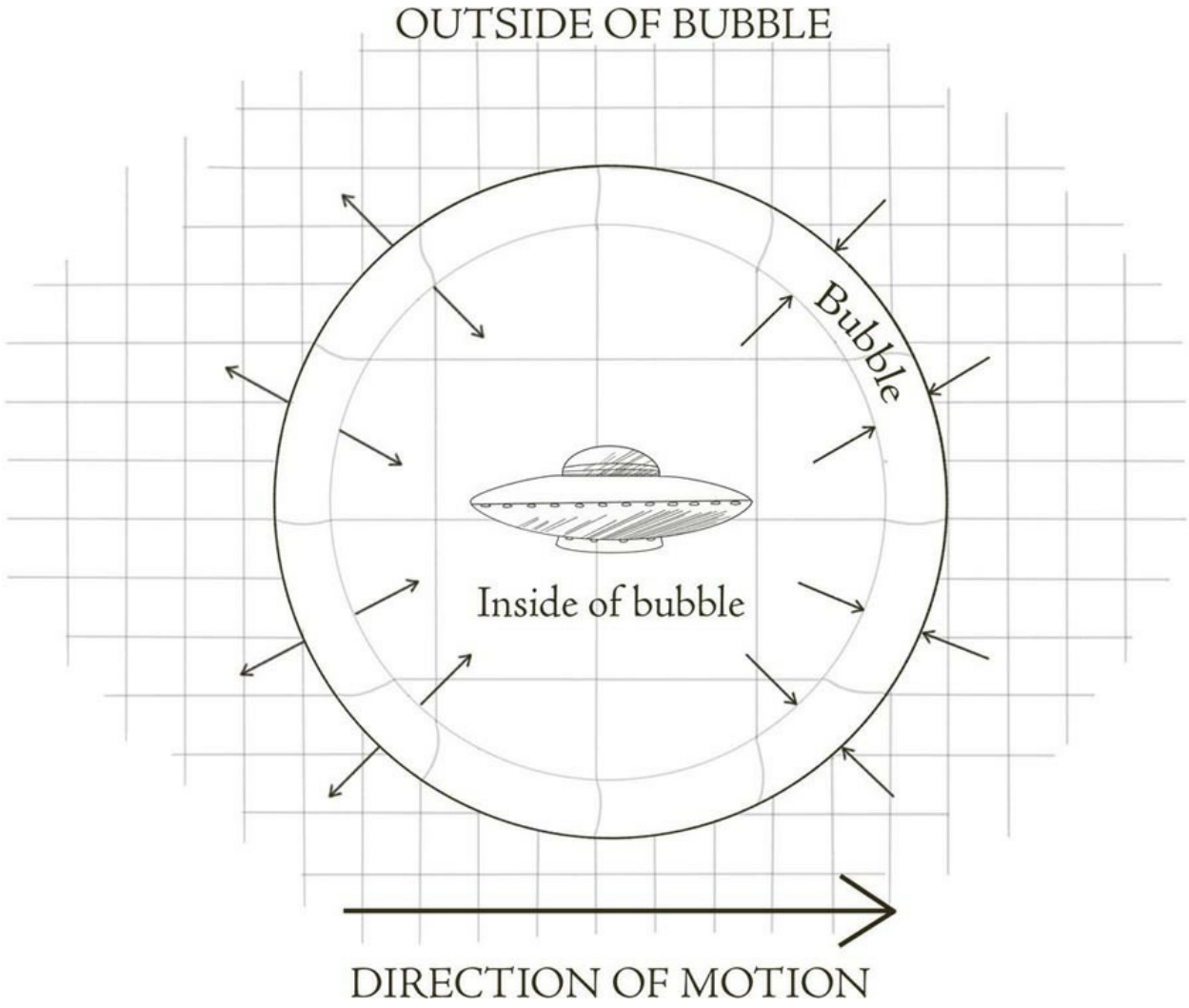
To be clear, these biological effects are not necessarily intentional. This could be like unintentionally standing behind a jet engine during takeoff.

When the propulsion system of a UAP is operational, it would behave like a giant radioactive power plant. It would be blueshifting visible light into dangerous territory for living tissue. Witnesses would be bombarded with UV rays, soft X-rays, and possibly gamma rays.

Gamma rays are the most dangerous. They're like tiny, super-energetic bullets that penetrate flesh, destroy blood and cells, and disrupt the genetic code of DNA.

Hal's theory explained why some people reported missing time. As you approach such a craft, you begin to experience time closer to how it is experienced in the bubble. This could also alter a witness's perception of the size of the craft. The craft that looks small from a distance at first glance may actually be quite large up close.





Our conversation naturally turned to the possibility of building such a technology. It would take a lot of energy to create and sustain the bubble, say, somewhere in the 3.2 or 5.6 Terahertz range. If you were going to generate this much energy, you'd want to use it as efficiently as possible.

That got us thinking more . . .

It also turns out that this bubble, in theory, can only be so big due to the great amount of energy required to create it.

So whatever you put in it has to fit neatly inside the bubble, which is equal distance on all sides from the center, 360 degrees. Because you can't be in different space-times at once, you would never want to have part of your craft *inside* the bubble while another part of your craft was *outside* it. The bubble must surround the craft equally, on all sides, to avoid catastrophic consequences.

There is only one shape in geometry that allows you to be protected

equally on all sides: think of our diving bell analogy, a sphere. A sphere-shaped craft may not be very practical when the bubble is turned off. The object would be rolling all over the place.

So an alternative solution would be to flatten your sphere into a disc . . .

A saucer.

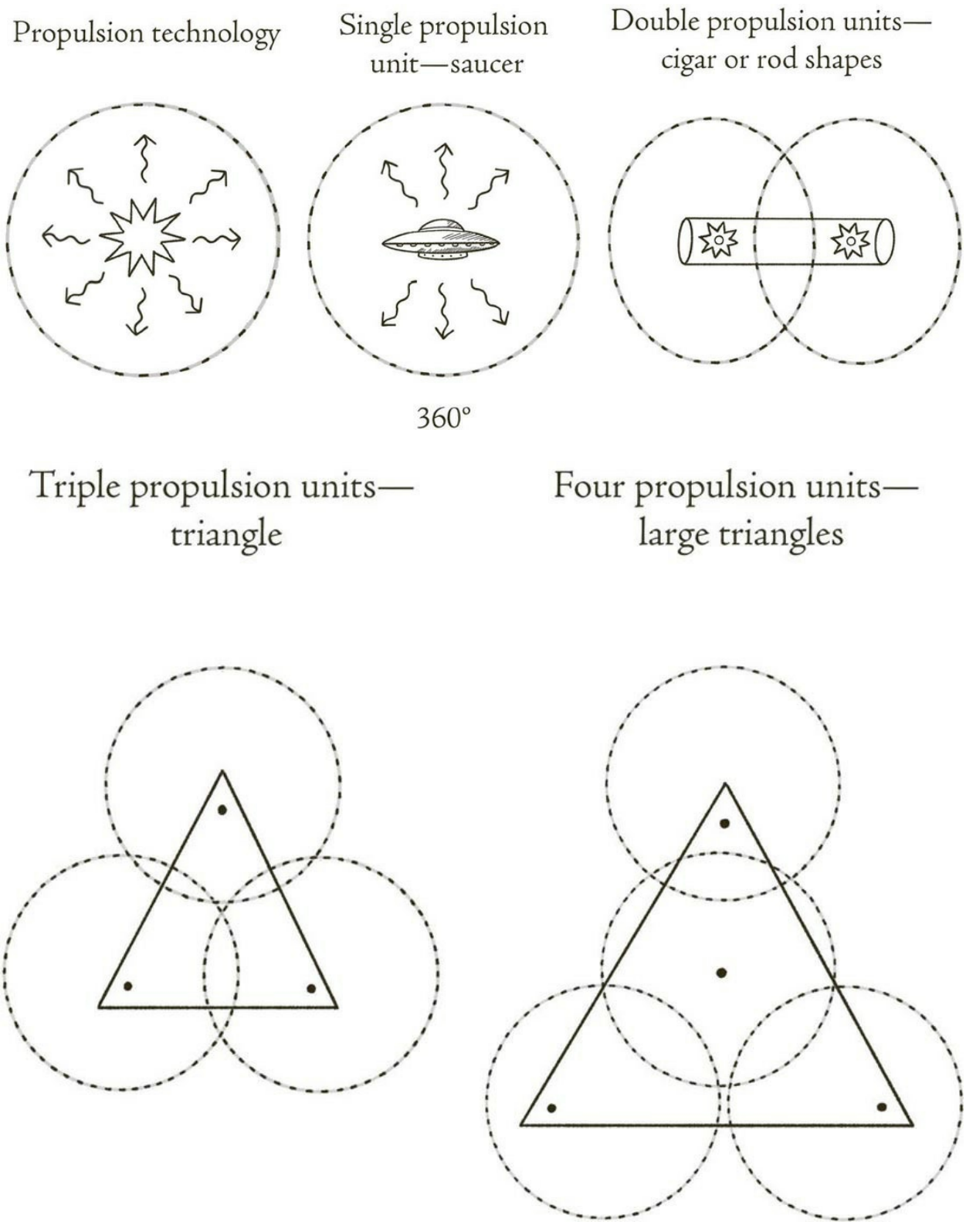
Form follows function. The stereotypical flying saucer looks the way it does because it *must* fit inside that bubble while remaining protected on all sides.

What if more than one saucer wanted to travel in a group? The bubble can only be so big. Well, if you wanted to have a craft that was bigger than the bubble, you could have several discs fly very close together so their bubbles overlap each other.

Or you could create an elongated disc, like a rod-or cigar-shaped craft, with a bubble on each end. These cigar-shaped craft have been reported widely throughout history.

And if you need something bigger than that, there is another shape in geometry that allows you to maximize your surface area, while minimizing the number of propulsion units, or "bubble makers." If you merge three bubbles, you can fit an equilateral triangle in the middle, which is the other common UAP shape observed.

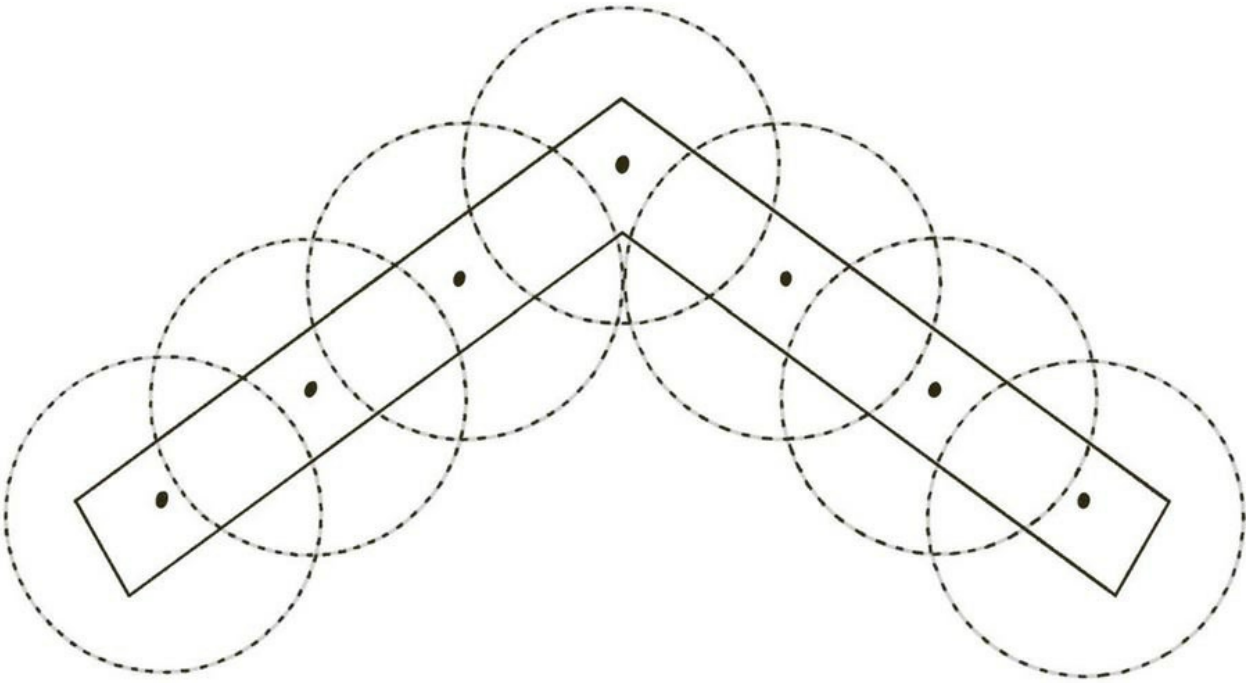
What some eyewitnesses report as lights at each apex of these triangular-shaped craft may in fact not be lights at all, but propulsion units, or bubble makers. The light seen at each corner might actually be the result of a Doppler shift. Some eyewitnesses have reported a fourth light in the middle of the largest triangles. Yet another bubble maker?



Some eyewitnesses describe large, lumbering boomerangs, with a series of light below them. If you need a craft larger than a triangle, there are no

other shapes in geometry where you can maximize your size while minimizing the number of propulsion units. At that point, you simply create a vehicle that has a long line of propulsion units in a single row.

Five or more propulsion units—
huge boomerang



Hal had in his possession material allegedly recovered from the Roswell crash. It was an intricate and fragile piece revealing multiple microscopic layers of interlacing bismuth and magnesium. It also seemed to have a beveled edge. Was this part of the secret to UAP flight? Hal and other scientists theorized that propulsion units alone could not generate the bubble. The key was the harnessing of energy plus its interaction with the skin of the craft. Imagine the exterior of your car actually being an integral part of the car's engine.

But where did they get all that energy? Sitting in that room, we attempted to imagine a holy grail of fuels, a dream engine that would burn without creating enormous thermal heat while providing an inexhaustible supply of energy.

Hal explained that if one were to try to achieve the levels of energy required to warp space-time, one might need to start with the most basic form

of energy that we know of—that of the underlying roiling quantum fluctuations of empty space, so-called vacuum fluctuations. This speculative hypothesis, yet to be practically implemented, was based on the now well-studied phenomenon of what is commonly referred to as zero-point energy. However, also discussed were alternative hypotheses.

I remembered a conversation I had, years prior, with another scientist. His speculation was that the hydrogen atom, or, more specifically, the proton of a hydrogen atom, could be harnessed and ultimately used for energy in a similar way as we do today with nuclear power plants. The only thing lacking was an efficient technology to crack the proton open in a useful and controlled manner to release potential energy. From there one could unlock the unimaginable energy held hidden deep within the nucleus. Although hydrogen is the most abundant element in the universe, it is usually in the form of a gas. However, hydrogen happens to be abundant in a very dense form that we know more commonly as liquid water, or H_2O.

At the time, we already had sufficient data to imply that UAP were often encountered near bodies of water and, in some cases, appeared to be interacting with it. Liquid water seemed to be a commonality, and some data even suggested that UAP were taking water on board.

If this was true, all one had to do was remove the oxygen from the hydrogen molecule of H_2O, and voila! You have a virtually unlimited supply of protons to crack open and unlock the energy hidden deep within.

I thought to myself, maybe our planet is simply a gas station? We humans have gone to war many times to protect our own resources. Maybe UAP are concerned about their planetary gas station? Were we simply a galactic Exxon pump? Recently, our own scientists on earth have identified other planets with water. Surely a species this advanced can figure out the same.

I got chills thinking about it. So many of the long-standing mysteries now made better sense to me.

The *Nimitz* and *Roosevelt* sightings happened on the open sea. In the Belgian Congo in 1952, the UAP fled the uranium mines and escaped in the direction of Lake Tanganyika, the second-largest fresh-water lake in the world. And in that 1988 UAP incident on Lake Erie, as the UAP descended, the Coast Guard investigators observed “that the ice was cracking and moving abnormal amounts as the object came closer.” I thought of that Tic Tac darting around a roiling, bubbling circle of the Pacific Ocean in 2004. Maybe, when the water or ice is agitated, these ships can more easily strip off

and harvest the hydrogen atoms?

As for the hydrogen-as-fuel theory, I could not get the idea out of my mind. I kept thinking about how humans have generated energy throughout history. We went from burning wood as our only energy source to annihilating entire cities in less than two thousand years. From making steam, to the use of gunpowder and dynamite, to the atomic and nuclear bombs. The time between each milestone of energy extraction continues to shrink with each leap in technology. The smaller the matter, the greater the release of energy once unlocked.

Case in point: Heron, the ancient inventor, who wrote the first account about a steam engine, called the "Aeolipile," proved how the expansion of liquid water into steam could be used to do mechanical work. By separating water molecules from each other, you could use that steam to do work. Then came the invention of gunpowder, dynamite, and the internal combustion engine, which further increased our ability to do mechanical work by separating the molecular bonds themselves within each molecule. Later, the Manhattan Project unlocked the secrets of the atom with devastating and miraculous effect. By splitting the atom, even more energy was released. A mere fifty years after building the A-bomb and nuclear reactors, humans were on the precipice of bending time and space and possibly fashioning micro black holes in the Large Hadron Supercollider at CERN in Europe.

For all my enthusiasm, Hal didn't subscribe to this H_2O hypothesis but thought it intriguing enough to not dismiss it entirely. Later, Hal offered an alternative H_2O hypothesis. Hal suggested that in addition to hydrogen and oxygen, liquid water has small amounts of the hydrogen isotope deuterium, in the form of D_2O, a significant ingredient for nuclear fusion energy generation. There is also "deuterated water," HDO, which is more plentiful in normal water than D_2O. Perhaps UAP were mining water for a yet-to-be-identified form of propulsion?

Up to this point, it still remained a mystery why UAP seemed to be interested in liquid water.

We had been in the SCIF now for several hours. Hal had explained how the primary observables were possible, even the sizes and shapes of the various craft seen over the years, based upon propulsion theories.

In true intelligence form, a list of commonalities of UAP encounters was discussed. During what seemed to be a college lecture in our SCIF, we

realized what this also suggested: the explanation for why there has been so much UAP activity around our nuclear sites and technologies.

We have evolved more technically in the last eighty years than we have in the previous two hundred thousand years. And the uptick in UAP activity has increased in line with our advancement of harnessing energy.

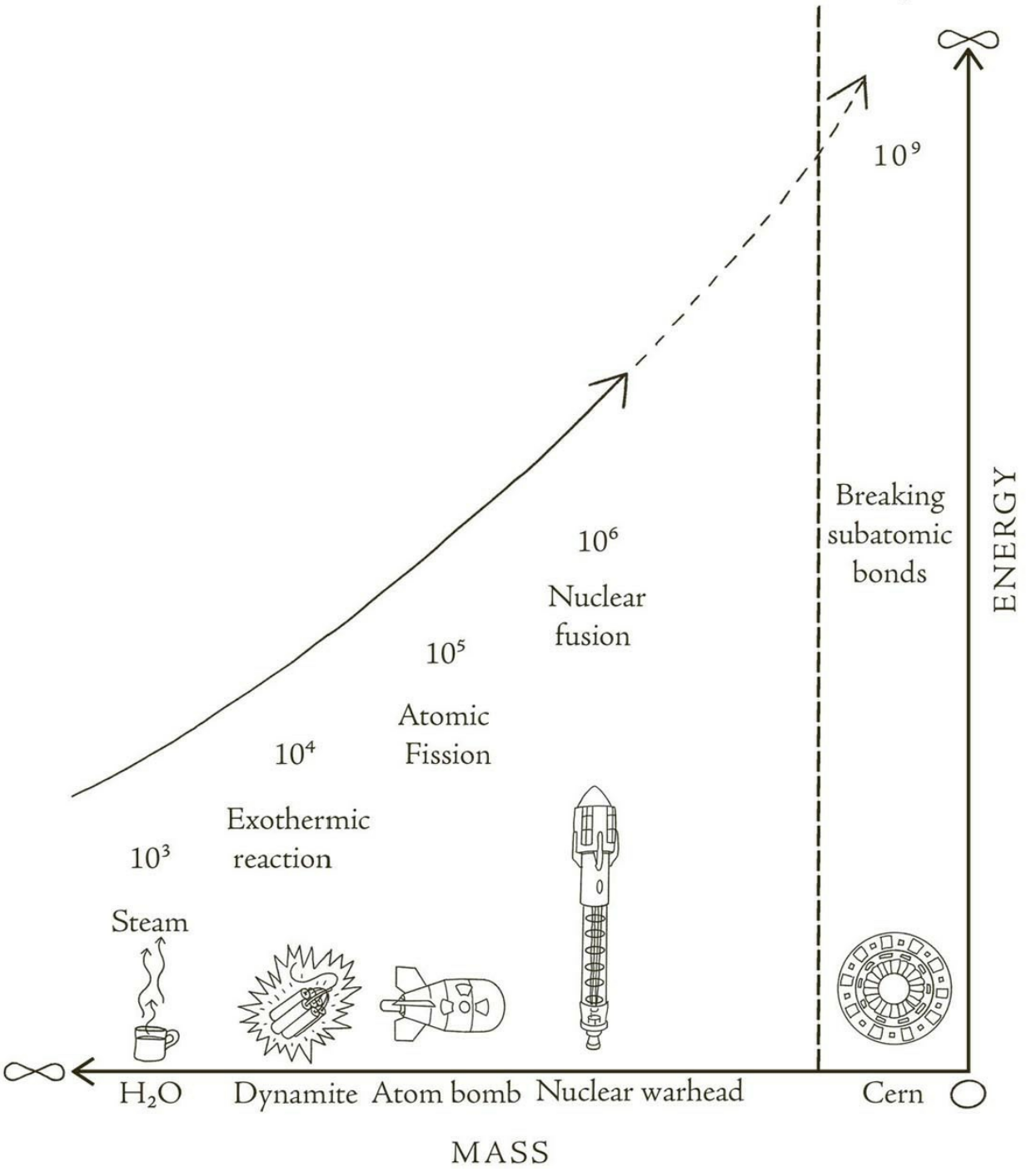
We realized we are on the path to exploiting the energy levels needed to possibly warp space-time ourselves, and UAP have been observing (essentially conducting ISR) and been concerned with our progress.

As an example, if you were a species whose evolution had granted you the knowledge to travel deep into the cosmos, you would start to take notice when your cosmic neighbors could start doing the same. The telltale sign that your neighbor is getting close to doing the same might be the signatures of an atomic explosion by your neighbor.

- The two (2) ways we know to warp space-time are with a lot of mass or lots and lots of energy!
- As we break the bonds of smaller and smaller elements of mass, more energy is released!

$E = mc^2$

At this energy level, it is theoretically possible to warp space-time.



If you were an advanced species, perhaps you would start to get a little nervous, especially if your galactic neighbor has a long history of violence.

Hal had moved this problem out of the realm of theory and into the nuts-and-bolts world of engineering. What if humans could theoretically do what these UAP have done for thousands or millions of years?

Then what?

We could travel the universe. We could explore new worlds.

But would we do that first?

Probably not. If we had the power to do what the UAP do, we would likely first use it to make war. After all, we have a history of being a very violent species and annihilating anything we perceive as a threat.

As such, we may be perceived as a potential threat to *them*.

Decades of investigations and theories that didn't pan out had led to this historic moment, around this table, with this small group of people. All of us realized at once that we may have just cracked some of the greatest mysteries of all time.

Although Hal warned us this was all theoretical, the chain of logic was unassailable and obvious—blindingly obvious.

We now had a working hypothesis of why we are being visited. Why we are being watched. Why they are testing our technology. We had good, solid ideas about how their technology works, why their craft look and perform the way they do, how their technology affects our environment, and a motive for their interest in our planet. And we had reached the sobering truth that humanity is quickly approaching the danger point. A point of no return.

For a long time, they've been harvesting water and monitoring us, perhaps to see just how dangerous we've become. To gauge our threat level.

Here's an analogy.

Imagine you're a biologist at a zoo who studies a gorilla who works at mastering new skills, every day for decades. You're a student of science with no plan to ever hurt this magnificent creature.

Then, one day, you learn from security that the gorilla got out of its cage and trashed its enclosure.

"Let's keep an eye on this," you tell your team.

Days later, the gorilla manages to break into the security office, play with a tranquilizer gun, then scamper back to his cage.

The gorilla is now evolving to a point where he could be a problem for

everyone at the zoo.

And then, one day on a gorgeous Saturday morning, you and your family step out of your house to find the gorilla from the zoo is now on your front lawn with a shotgun that was stolen from the security office. You never once intended to hurt the gorilla, but now your entire family is in danger. The magnificent creature you studied and loved is now an eight-hundred-pound silverback heading toward your porch with a loaded weapon.

You have two choices: learn to communicate with the gorilla right away, or shoot it dead.

The voices in the SCIF went silent—and stayed silent.

Everyone was lost in thought. Everyone sensed the implications. We all realized that *we* may very well be the gorilla that's about to show up on the biologist's front lawn with a shotgun, and we have a long history of violence. Humanity is approaching a moment that nothing in our evolution has prepared us for. We are speeding toward a new reality like a bullet train that can't be stopped. Ahead of us is a crossroad, that moment where we show up on the biologist's front lawn and a decision has to be made.

A decision that could dictate the future of humanity.

Again, some believe that the attention UAP have shown to our nuclear facilities is simply that of an advanced species concerned that humans will damage the planet. While that's a nice and positive thought, there is nothing in our history to substantiate that. That said, I honestly hope that their intention is to help us, but I also believe strongly we have to be prepared for anything.

Humanity acts as if no one else is watching us, like we are alone. But a more advanced intelligent life is likely observing us. Humanity needs to become more aware of our place in the universe and the potential consequences of our actions.

Regardless of their motivation, if this tech is cracked by another nation-state with bad intentions it will be an existential threat to our nation and the planet as a whole.

Those are the urgent national security concerns and urgent concerns for humanity at large.

Some of our nation's past leaders were briefed on all this, and that is why this matter is now being taken more seriously than ever before.

Whether or not our government discloses this, I believe the public has a right to know.

CHAPTER 17

WHAT NOW?

The traffic leaving DC is always insane. You're moving bumper-to-bumper, feeling your blood pressure rising with every slow inch of progress. The times I've flown out of Washington at night, I've been mesmerized by the headlights you see from above the city. An endless choker of white light going in one direction, an endless choker of red moving in the other. You cannot help shake the feeling that the city is being slowly squeezed and constricted, like a giant anaconda whose coils wrap around the ten-mile city perimeter, tightening with every breath.

That's the way I felt that afternoon behind the wheel of my old Cadillac. The suite of classical music I usually listened to on the ride home didn't help to ease my stress. The veins in my neck throbbed against my shirt collar. I felt hyper-alive, overwhelmed, and terrified. In some ways, it reminded me of what someone may feel as they are being marched to the guillotine. It was eerily silent, and everything seemed to be moving in slow motion, not just the traffic. Colors also seemed more vibrant for some reason.

Only a few people were privy to the fact that humanity could truly be facing an outrageous extinction event of our own making because we're not taking the threat seriously. Beyond the windows of my car, everywhere I looked, thousands of people sat trapped inside shiny metal boxes of their own reality. Three lanes of cars to my right and the two lanes to my left . . . filled with people thinking about PTA meetings, Little League, and ballet. Some listened to talk radio while others ruminated over how to hide their ongoing workplace affair from their spouse.

It was profound. I felt like I was on the surface of the moon. Nothing seemed to matter. I had ingested the red pill and didn't like what I saw. I saw a species that wasn't ready. I saw a reality that wasn't real at all.

As I peered across the other lanes of traffic, I felt numb, isolated, and

betrayed. These people have no effing clue about anything, I thought to myself. The whole thing is a big lie. We tell ourselves we are the apex predator, but in reality, we are minuscule.

The traffic eased a bit once on Highway 50 heading toward Kent Island, Maryland. In my heightened sense of awareness, I noticed things I would not normally see. Highway signs. A cop pulling someone over for violating high-occupancy vehicle lane rules. The inane ads on the backs of big rigs.

It hit me like a brick: We are such a simple species. We must be told what to do and how to behave because we can't do it for ourselves. From speed limits to travel lane restrictions to what we should have for dinner, we are constantly told how we should conduct ourselves among our fellow citizens. Is mankind really ready for the truth? Most of us only want to hear truths that fit comfortably into our timeworn, preexisting narratives. When we are forced to confront the truth, we routinely suppress it in favor of making ourselves feel better.

Suddenly the various stories in UAP literature came into new focus.

Events like Roswell were no longer a puzzle but an intellectual cakewalk. Of *course* those two saucers had crashed that day in 1947. Our primitive EMP device must have somehow disrupted their propulsion bubble, rendering them vulnerable. It would have been like a 757 losing all power on its jet engines. Then, in one fell swoop, the UAP painfully met the reality of the New Mexico desert.

What about that case in Socorro, New Mexico, back in 1964? Policeman Lonnie Zamora had unwittingly witnessed two forms of UAP propulsion that day. When the egg-shaped craft took off from the desert floor, it had done so with a huge roar and a blast of blue flame. It was so loud Zamora ran furiously up the ravine to escape, fearful that the aircraft might explode. Then, as soon as the craft reached a certain height above the ground, it flew away *silently*. It may have had to use brute force technology to leave the ground, and once its antigravity bubble snapped in place, it had effortlessly sailed away. Perhaps that one-two model could account for why witnesses offered varying accounts of the sounds and heat levels emanating from the craft they saw.

I wondered about the character of these so-called visitors, our friends from out of town, as I had when we tried to understand their interest in nuclear sites. What made them tick? I could see only three scenarios:

1. The visitors are benevolent, and don't want to interfere with our exist
   They just want to continue using earth as a galactic way station for na
   resources. Or, possibly, they're so benevolent that they hope to save us
   ourselves.
2. They're malevolent; they are here to take from us and will show up in
   numbers in the future.
3. They're neutral; like humans, they can do both good and bad, and they
   to observe and learn from us.

If they're good, they're not doing a very good job of enacting a program of benevolence. They didn't sweep down like angels in the 1940s to stop the deployment of two atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. Nor have they stopped famine, wars, and mass slaughter. They didn't stop nuclear proliferation or the development of the nuclear bomb. So this theory of their character feels false. Then again, it's also possible that their definition of benevolence means leaving us to our own devices.

If they are neutral to us, then we must begin to think in diplomatic and political terms. What do they want, and what do we want? Can we both learn from each other? Is there a possibility of trade between us? Will they favor one of our planet's governments over the rest?

The worst-case scenario for us is that they are bad. If they're bad, they could be conducting what the military calls an IPB operation—initial preparation of the battlefield. And you know what? To a guy grounded in the reality of war, everything we have seen thus far looks *a lot* like IPB.

They have made ceaseless visits to our plane of existence since antiquity, with more recent visits since the dawn of the twentieth century. They have tested themselves against our aircraft. They have meddled with our ICBMs, turning them both on and off. At Colares, they intentionally enacted a hostile program against humans. While many serious researchers struggle with this aspect of the phenomenon, there are certainly no shortage of reports of abductions, subcutaneous implantation of devices, and livestock mutilations. We have evidence that strongly suggests they are interested in our military capabilities and our nuclear technology.

Everything I mentioned is what a superior culture might consider doing if they were conducting a long-range reconnaissance. You would try to assess your enemy's military prowess, response, and capabilities. You would surreptitiously test neutralizing their best weapons. You would want to

understand their physiology, their bodily immune defenses, and perhaps their food sources, livestock, and agriculture. You would mount a series of reconnaissance on a small segment of their population, just to see if you could pull it off.

Everything we've seen in the twentieth century *could* be a prelude to an invasion. It is a possibility that we cannot ignore.

Do I personally believe this? It doesn't matter what I think. What matters is what *could be* going on.

Let's look at the third scenario.

One of the words you hear often in the abduction research is *indifferent*. Those who claim that they were abducted and medically examined by visitors say that their captors were careful to minimize their pain and torment. In some cases, captors assured abductees that they would remember little of what occurred. In the end, abductees report feeling that these beings did not care one way or another if they lived or died. Many experiencers reported feeling completely vulnerable, helpless, and afraid.

As a former special agent, if a witness reported being whisked away against their will, I would consider that an act of kidnapping, a federal crime. And if the witness said they were touched against their will, I would consider that assault, yet another crime in human terms. Have we become so comfortable coloring within the lines of our projected reality that we refuse to look up and around to see what could really be happening?

When humans are pitted against another species, we *always* put the interests of *our* species first. We practice indifference. We must anticipate the possibility the occupants of UAP may do the same as we become a nuisance.

One question I couldn't resist asking: Has this been an IPB operation all along, for thousands of years of human existence? Or have we nudged ourselves closer to the edge by evolving to be a threat? After my time in the SCIF, I believed the latter. But I couldn't prove it. It didn't really matter, though. If there was a small chance that they were malevolent, we had to be more prepared. From a national security point of view, we couldn't take any chances .

Night crept in around me. The lights on the opposite shore of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge twinkled. The madness of the metro area had slipped away, and I could see the channel markers in the bay.

I felt more alone. More unsure. But at least I was headed home.

I didn't feel good to have this information percolating in my mind. It was

too big. Too much. By rights, every human on earth should know what I knew. If everyone knew, then maybe we could come together for once as a species.

My job did not permit me to share this kind of information. Not one bit of it. What was I supposed to do with this knowledge? Were Hal, Jay, I, and all our colleagues supposed to slink off to some corner of the Pentagon with this potentially life-changing burden on our shoulders? Just ignore it, be team players, and pretend that the bureaucracy mattered most? If the worst-case scenario holds true, there might not even be a bureaucracy left. How in the hell was I going to explain this to others in the chain of command? How would they process it?

I didn't know these answers. But I had to find them—and soon.

I didn't get much sleep that night. Not to disturb Jenn's rest, I crept silently out of the bedroom. Our new German shepherd, Paris, yawned, eyed me once, then nestled herself back on the covers at the foot of the bed. I checked on the kids before moving to the darkness of the living room.

I was consumed with the thought that I had to do all I could to keep them safe. Jenn knew that work had been stressing me out lately. She had no idea why, and she certainly knew nothing of the fresh intelligence that had been uploaded to my mind that day. She and I had been talking again about ways to inject more family time into our lives, more relaxation, more time off. But frankly, that line of thought often made us sound like cat burglars who believed that one last score would turn their lives around. Our first daughter, Taylor, would leave for college soon. There was no way we were going to extract ourselves from Washington and the jobs we had in the metro area. We couldn't. Not yet.

Like everyone else who worked in government, I routinely flirted with thoughts of leaving for the private sector. But professionally I wanted my Pentagon career to end on a positive note.

Two glowing eyes appeared in the darkness. Our black cat, Boo, slinked through the living room, pausing once to study me. I'm sure I looked supremely bewildered. Cats seem to have a funny way of sensing when their owners are in distress. As I sat on the sofa, she cocked her head sideways and stared at me for a few moments. During the day, she appeared to the whole family as just a normal housecat. At night she became the predator ordained by her DNA. The dark never seemed to bother Boo. In fact, she preferred it.

Sitting in the darkness, it hit me again: my true purpose in life has always

been to find and defend the truth. I remembered the biblical motto of one of my employers, “And the truth shall set you free.” Now I had to find a way to lead others to this new truth. But could I achieve this without violating my security oath or losing my job? The Pentagon was my life. My colleagues were my life. My family was my life. But the human race needed transparency and disclosure. I needed to figure out a way to educate anyone who would listen. But how? Was one man really going to challenge world governments, religions, and science to change their perspectives? I’m only one person, and I’m certainly not a hero. I served with several heroes—and I’m nowhere near them.

I tallied everything I had in my favor. Did I know the phenomenon to be real? Unequivocally yes. Did others know it to be real? Yes. Did I trust them? Implicitly. Men like Hal, Will, Jay, and other colleagues were way smarter than me. I damn well trusted them. I trusted too the insights of our advisors. If they all thought the UAP technology we had observed was unlike any other found on the planet, I was inclined to believe them, our witnesses, and the evidence.

But . . .

I knew also that every professional has blind spots. When workers labor in silos and speak only to their team members, they develop tunnel vision. This wasn’t just a government failing. It was global. Academics, scientists, politicians, and experts the world over were guilty of the same thing.

Had I broken out of my silo and investigated evidence beyond the material our team had gathered? I sure thought so. I had read government historical records. I had done a deep dive into Project Blue Book and its predecessors, Projects Sign and Grudge. I read the testimony of airmen who witnessed the tampering of our ICBMs by unknown entities. A modern aerospace firm indicated their desire. We still were not clear if this apparent reversal of position was a sincere gesture or not. These companies have spent decades keeping this material hidden and now for some reason, one of them wanted to share it with us.

Now, most recently, Nolan and Vallée had explored the composition of the 1977 Iowa molten metal aggregate and had uncovered another mystery for us to solve. Outwardly, the samples contained elements you’d find anywhere in our own solar system: sodium, magnesium, aluminum, silicon, iron, and manganese. However, some of those elements had been engineered as isotopes of the original element. Why would anyone manufacture three

different isotopes of magnesium, and four isotopes of iron? At the atomic level, the isotopes were arranged in a matrix with very deliberate organization and structure between them. Our experts didn't know how we could replicate such things. Furthermore, there seemed to be some fractal properties associated with the material, a never-ending repetition of patterns within the physical matrix that seemed random and yet uniform at the same time. Interestingly, the materials seemed to have the ability to transmit multiple frequencies. As Hal explained it to me, normally antennae must be at least half the size of the wave form to work. This material, however, seemed to be able to transmit frequencies at a much larger amplitude than it should have been able to. Hal speculated that you could transmit a vast amount of data across such material. But no materials experts who inspected these isotopes knew how you'd go about making them.

Hal Puthoff's words rang in my head: "*It is now a technological challenge*."

We needed the best minds in the world on this issue, pronto. If the governments of the world came clean, then maybe the world's greatest minds could come together to use this technology to save our planet and species from all the problems we all face. Good science, the kind practiced in the world's universities and institutes, succeeded because it was transparent. Geniuses in labs did the work, wrote it up, and published it for all the world to see. Subsequent researchers built on that knowledge, until each discipline arrived at a consensus.

We had no consensus on UAP because the work had been relegated to the shadows. I had spent my life safeguarding secrets. Now I felt in my bones that secrets for the sake of secrets was ultimately a dead idea and could cause more harm than good.

Don't get me wrong, I have always safeguarded classified information from enemies. But as a nation we hid the reality of UAP from our own people. Heck, we were hiding the truth from our own leaders. This was an egregious violation placed upon us as keepers of the secrets.

Groggily, as I headed back to my bedroom, I looked in on each of my daughters in turn.

I had no idea what their futures were. They barely knew themselves. But if they someday wanted to chase the secrets of the universe, didn't they deserve to know the truth? And didn't they and their school friends deserve to know that we weren't alone in the universe?

I had the power to jump-start this conversation, but the consequences would not be good for me or my family. An old saying says: “History never treats kindly those who try and rush her.”

As I entered our bedroom, I heard Paris let out a long sigh, almost as if she were acknowledging my plight. I peeled back the covers and took a swig of water. The moon illuminated the liquid. Here was something precious to our species that we took for granted. How would we feel if it turned out that other life forms traveled billions or even trillions of miles for something as simple as a glass of water?

I nosed the Cadillac into the big town the next day, determined to start moving the needle. I was hopeful. I had seen what happened when you put solid UAP evidence in front of smart people. You opened their eyes. And the first words out of their mouths after absorbing this newfound knowledge were “Okay, so it’s real. Now what?” More solid data would help open more eyes.

A night of tossing and turning had implanted two courses of action in my mind.

1. We knew that our friends from out of town were drawn to the sea and t nuclear capabilities. Our OPLAN Interloper was pending review by the Staff. We hadn’t heard back about it in months and needed to start nuc the right people. The document was elegant in its rationale. It had al necessary ingredients—time, location, circumstances, and an appendix included the last three months’ worth of UAP reporting. Anyone readi would quickly understand the urgency.
2. We needed to get to the Secretary of Defense. The man everyone i Pentagon referred to as SECDEF. If we were permitted to speak direct him, I knew he would trust the intel we were conveying to him.

There are only five people on the planet who I’d suit up for and follow into war today. One of those individuals is the new secretary of defense, James “Mad Dog” Mattis, or, as his friends called him, “Chaos.”

In the Pentagon, people spoke of the man in hushed tones. He was a thinker, an avid reader, a scholar. A true warrior monk. I’d first met him in 2001 in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Shortly after, I would introduce Mattis to my friend John Robert, who would become one of Mattis’s go-to guys on the ground.

Even before the position had been created, I served as the first-ever

counterintelligence coordinating authority in Afghanistan. I became one of Mattis's off-the-books intelligence advisors. Mattis had the power to save lives or annihilate them. My job, with the help of John, was to make sure he had the right information to make the right decision.

One of my early bonding moments with him was when I came to him with what is known as immediate flash traffic. "Sir, there's going to be a rocket attack against us in like ten minutes, right here on the airfield," I said. "We've got to get some support."

He turned to one of his underlings and started yelling. "Get all the helos in the air *now*! Gunners on all perimeters. I want these f—ers dead!" When the coordinates had been relayed, he turned to me and said with a chuckle, "I hope you're right, Lue."

That was Mattis: a no-nonsense, battle-hardened commander, but also unafraid to reveal his humanity. He loved his troops. I was privileged to see his kindness extended to others.

Another time, some of his men were pinned down hard in a fire-fight outside the perimeter of the airfield. With ammunition low, they radioed for support, but no one nearby could assist. By chance, a small convoy of amphibious Light Armored Vehicles (LAV) happened to be nearby. Mattis led the convoy. When the call came in, like a character in an old John Wayne movie Mattis told his people to reroute: "Let's go get our boys."

The caravan hurried to the new location and tore the enemy apart. Equipped with the 25 mm Bushmaster gun, that *thump-thump-thump* meant the enemy was having a very bad day. An amphibious vehicle crested a ridge and slammed to the ground. The top popped open, and there was Mattis. "The welcome wagon is here, boys," he shouted.

Our boys were saved. The hostiles fled as soon as they grasped the magnitude of the overwhelming firepower Mattis brought with him. Stories like this and many more were lived on a daily basis by Mattis, and I had the privilege to witness some of it for myself. I give him credit for saving many lives, including mine.

God, we loved him and still do.

More than a decade later, I was working in the Pentagon building with Mad Dog himself, who had accepted the position of secretary of defense in the incoming Trump administration. The only problem was, there were about twenty thousand other people standing between him and me.

I briefed Jay on my goals. I would set my sights on briefing the secretary.

I wanted SECDEF's clarity going forward on incursions and range safety issues. I wanted a letter to secure access to the Legacy Program's UAP materials. I wanted a whole lot more, but I just needed an opening to plead my case. To achieve these goals, I began an elaborate dance with everyone in the secretary's orbit.

Some may ask why I didn't pick up the phone and call Mattis for a meeting since he already knew and trusted me. That's a fair question. The answer is, this was still the Pentagon. Most of us were civilians, but we worked for the military. Under no circumstances could I buck the chain of command and use my past relationship with the general to personally schedule a briefing with him. To do so would be an insubordinate act, an indictment of his chain of command, and an insult to the institution and the general himself. It's important to understand that Mattis was very focused on strengthening the authority and recognition of the chain of command during the Trump administration and I would be undermining him and his efforts if I disregarded the chain of command, no matter how important my concerns were.

I had to go through the proper channels even though I could not trust my own channels within OUSD(I). Despite my best efforts, neither Jay nor myself could batter down the bureaucracy. I worked the phones and told anyone who could assist us that we had a major problem on our hands.

I was specifically concerned about the recent increase of UAP activity, beginning with the *Roosevelt* incidents and now expanding to other very sensitive military locations. Our men and women in uniform craved guidance on this issue, and the only way I could elicit a directive was to bump it up to the next level. I went so far as to pull some political favors based on the capital I had built doing favors for others over my long career.

All to no avail. I was stuck in a catch-22. The read-on list was slim; I had to be careful what I said about our effort. If I said too little, no one would want to help me. If I said too much, no one would believe me. Like the old Goldilocks bedtime story, the porridge had to be just right. But everyone in the chain of command desired their porridge to be a different temperature than everyone else's.

During this time, Hal had made a few connections of his own. One contact was a highly intelligent man named Jim Semivan, a senior member of the CIA who had enjoyed a long, successful career. To paint a quick picture of Jim: Born and raised in Ohio and having attended Ohio State University,

Jim joined the CIA in 1982 and retired in 2007 after a twenty-five-year career. At the time of his retirement, he was a member of the CIA's Senior Intelligence Service. He served multiple overseas and domestic tours along with having senior management positions in CIA headquarters. He's also the recipient of the Agency's Career Intelligence Medal, along with numerous Exceptional Performance Awards and Meritorious Unit Citations. He operated around the world and recruited high-level operatives. His background was the complete opposite of mine. I recruited scrappy street fighters, insurgents, bomb makers. Jim recruited foreign ambassadors and attachés. Having recently left the agency, Jim remained a CIA contractor but was still "plugged in."

Hal suggested to Jay that we meet with Jim at the Pentagon. This was the first time we brought someone into the fold from the outside. We were taking a big chance trusting Jim. Neither of us had ever met him before, but Hal vouched for him.

Jim met Jay, another colleague, and me in a quiet room, deep within the Pentagon. For our first meeting, we agreed not to let Jim know about anything we were doing. As I entered the room, I saw a short, gray-haired gentleman in a blue sport coat. With a huge grin, he stood up and extended his hand. He was obviously excited to see us. The meeting was relatively uneventful, much like a good first date. No one said much or offered anything. It was simply a meeting to get to know each other and, in true spy form, assess each other's motivations, experience, and training. We couldn't afford compromising our true efforts, so we all spoke in a kind of uncomfortable code, hoping the other person understood what we are trying to say, without actually saying it.

Jim reached out for another discussion some weeks later and we agreed to meet. I did a little more digging on Jim. It turned out he still contributed to some very important CIA efforts. Upon entering the room, Jim stood and greeted us warmly. He thanked us profusely for seeing him again. This time Jim mentioned that he was working with some colleagues who consisted of a hodgepodge of former senior military and intelligence officials and a rock star.

Rock star? I thought to myself. What the f—was a rock star doing as part of their group? Jim rattled off the officials' names, all legit, and all with security clearances and professional pedigrees. Then he said the rock star was Tom DeLonge.

Jim detected my confused look. “You know,” he said, “the lead singer of Blink-182?”

Something clicked. I suddenly remembered why I knew the name. My daughters were both big fans of their music. Jim was more forth-coming this time. He and his team were working to wrestle the UAP conversation out of the silos of government and place it into the hands of the American people. He had heard rumblings of a real UAP program being run out of the Pentagon, so he was excited to have finally found us.

“Look, Jim,” I said, cautioning him, “we haven’t told you anything of depth yet. The only reason we are having this meeting is because Hal vouched for you and you have a top secret security clearance. You can’t tell *anyone* who we are.”

“I absolutely understand, Lue. You have my word.”

“If you want this to work,” I continued, “we have to build trust. This is a big step in the right direction, but we must protect the program at all costs.”

This was the first time we ever referenced AATIP to someone not on the team. Jim finally received the verification he was looking for. To alleviate my fears, Jim courageously revealed a very personal UAP experience he had had while he was still a senior CIA official. He was offering me a bargaining chip, a way of saying, “Hey, look . . . I’ve got skin in the game too, and I have a lot to lose by sharing this information with you. But here is a token of my trust.” I appreciated that gesture very much and the details of his incident were very similar to other incidents I was aware of.

Jim became an ally. Next, we would meet another critical ally who would become an invaluable teammate.

CHAPTER 18

THE 800-POUND GORILLA

One of my team members knocked on the SCIF door and said, “Sir, a former *very senior*-level DoD official is here to talk to you.”

They had checked the guest’s credentials and he had the Office of Naval Intelligence clearances he needed to be in the building and to end up in a SCIF with me. I was very curious what this guy wanted.

A few moments later, Jay, another colleague, and I entered our SCIF conference room to find a tall, fit man, sharply dressed, with a leather satchel under his left arm.

“Hi! I’m Chris Mellon,” he said.

Chris went on to humbly fill us in on his professional experience working for the DoD.

The headline, so to speak, was CHRIS SERVED AS DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE.

In that position he was only one step removed from the secretary of defense. He oversaw all Department of Defense intelligence activities and Special Access Programs (SAPs). While a senator, William Cohen’s closest advisor on Capitol Hill was Chris Mellon. Later, when Cohen became Secretary of Defense, he brought Chris with him to be one of his trusted principals on his new staff. A very shrewd decision if you ask me.

My staff member had really undersold who was at my door when they simply referred to him as *very senior*. I was now more than curious.

Someone at this level wanting to help us could be the lucky break we needed, or he could be there to cause problems for us and be the proverbial hand grenade in our party punch bowl.

Chris expressed interest in helping us. He was pleased to have learned our program existed and even knew we were called AATIP. I was astonished that

he knew about us, since we had been operating in such secrecy. Then Chris asked, “How do I get read onto your program?”

Whoa, a presumptuous question, I thought. In the parlance of our world, reading someone onto a program is the equivalent of saying you are welcoming them into the fold, sharing with them everything you know. I didn’t know if he was really someone to trust yet, so I figured I would buy time and put him through a bit of a test. I remember looking over my shoulder, kind of smirking at one of my guys; then I turned to Chris and said, “Okay, well, if you want a briefing, I’ll brief you, but you’re gonna need these specific tickets before we can brief you on anything. Those are the rules.” I rattled off a long laundry list of clearances: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and so forth. In our world, *tickets* referred to one’s security clearances, their credentials, and their specific accesses.

Chris diligently wrote notes and said, “Okay, no sweat.” He set down his pen and said, “If I get these tickets, you’ll have a conversation with me?”

“Yep,” I responded. Chris thanked us for our time, shook our hands, and promised to return.

I knew that it takes over a year, sometimes, to even get *nominated* for some of these tickets. So I figured there was a good chance we would never hear from him again, but if he eventually got the tickets he needed and returned, we’d cross that bridge when we came to it. Maybe he’d return to trade info one day and tell us what he knew about legacy UAP programs due to his past oversight of SAPs.

After Chris left, I heard from Jim Semivan, who revealed that he was the one who told Chris about AATIP and where to find us. He vouched for Chris and also mentioned casually that aside from Chris’s extremely high-level government resume, Chris also happened to be a prominent member of the powerful Mellon family. As in Carnegie Mellon, Gulf Oil, and Mellon Bank, to name a few. Chris was an independently wealthy heir to one of America’s oldest financial and industrial dynasties. His grandfather literally helped build our country. I remember instantly respecting the fact that Chris hadn’t marketed those details to us, even in a subtle way. Again, he was very humble.

A week later, lawyers from the 9/11 terrorist defense team had cooked up a legal petition painting me as the devil incarnate and claiming I was preventing their detainee clients from having a fair trial. As I was writing a response to our general counsel, there was a knock on the door.

“Sir,” my assistant said, “Chris Mellon is here again.”

I said, “Well, what does he want? I told him we can’t brief him unless he has the tickets.”

My assistant said, “Um, Lue, he’s got the tickets.”

No f-ing way, I thought. He got all the correct tickets in just one week?

But when I flipped through the documents he proffered, he sure as hell had them. Every single one of them. Just to be safe, I made a quick call and double-checked each of his tickets. They all checked out. I was beyond impressed. Chris was clearly an operator of the highest level. I had never seen someone amass such complicated credentials so quickly.

I escorted Chris to a small conference room within another SCIF.

For the next three hours, I proceeded to share with Chris our reports, photographs, pictures, and data, and intel we had gathered on legacy efforts. Chris was transfixed by the large monitor as videos rolled along with pilot audio.

At the end of our meeting, Chris was frustrated, to say the least. He had spent years having oversight of all the SAPs for the DoD and he admitted to us that he had zero visibility into the UAP topic. Simply put, he should have been in the know and he wasn’t. Now he was fired up and wanted to be a part of the solution to what he agreed was a serious problem. After expressing some frustration, he pledged his loyalty to our efforts, and he became a trusted member of the team. Looking back, it’s one of the best and most important decisions I ever made.

CHAPTER 19

. . . AND THE HORSE YOU RODE IN ON

Before 2016 ended, I received the news from Jay that the Joint Staff had rejected assigning OPLAN Interloper an ACCM designation, our plan to lure UAP out of hiding on the open seas. Where I saw a bold initiative to make sense of what our servicemen and -women witnessed in the skies, leadership saw a great bucket of weirdness that was not within their usual daily lists of tasks. They did not want to be associated with the historical stigma around UFOs. But what if it's an adversary? What if China or Russia lapped us technologically? Or what if it's a nonhuman adversary? Shouldn't we do something?

That stigma we continued to face outraged me. It's the same thinking that got us into trouble numerous times before. Don't we ever learn? Does no one remember 9/11? Does no one worry about strategic surprise?

Early on, to make it easier to have the conversation, Jay came up with the idea of calling these objects unidentified aerial phenomena, UAP, instead of UFOs.

Bottom line, I considered this an egregious lapse in our national security. If we told people who were analyzing video that we knew the origins of the "aircraft," they were happy to analyze it. But if we simply said a UFO, we would be laughed out of the building. The term UAP was far more palatable. It reminded me of a Disney movie my daughter and I used to watch, *WALL-E*. The story is about a humble robot who innocently creates havoc by entering a sterile world of non-earth robots aboard a spaceship. The robots on the spaceship are so accustomed to their normal routine that they can't, or won't, recognize anything other than the specific task at hand. Efficient at their jobs, yes; able to think outside the box, nope, not even close.

Interloper may not have been officially dead, but it felt like it. I did not have hope that the operation would take place anytime soon, since it wasn't a priority for anyone other than us. The decision stung. Jay and I had spent considerable time coordinating that effort. We talked it over and formulated a new plan. What if Jim Semivan was right? What if we needed to somehow bring this topic to "the people"?

I wasn't thinking *everyone*, but a trusted few. Our friends and partners in the defense industry had skills and expertise lacking within the vast labyrinth of the Pentagon. We longed to broaden the number of experts who could analyze less-sensitive videos and offer their opinions about them. Instead of having experts get clearance and be forced to view the footage in a SCIF with us, I envisioned declassifying some videos and making them available on a secure government server. We would share the appropriate password with handpicked colleagues and instruct them to watch the videos at their leisure. With great success, AAWSAP had used the same approach to share all but one of the thirty-eight academic theoretical research papers Hal had commissioned from various scientists. Why reinvent the wheel in this case?

I was keenly aware of our responsibility to submit anything we would want publicly shared through the proper channels for review, even if it was unclassified or for official use only (FOUO). I knew I needed to select three unclassified videos to share. Knowing full well that these would be the least useful, I didn't have a choice. I could not release a classified video into the wild in good conscience. Once the three videos were selected, I would have to submit the proper paperwork and wait for a decision.

But which videos to choose? I deemed the DHS video from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, as too sensitive because of its origin, a sister agency. Even if it was already leaked online, I wasn't about to confirm it was indeed a US government video without DHS agreeing to that decision. Instead I picked three videos that depicted UAP characteristics. I anticipated that their low resolution would be an asset and hasten the approval process. I chose the FLIR video (aka Tic Tac from 2004), and the GoFast and GIMBAL videos from 2015. I described all three videos on a single Form 1910, which the DoD uses to request declassification of everything from documents to multimedia content.

In the space on the form where I was to list the reason for publication, I simply typed, "Not Applicable. Not for publication. Research and analysis ONLY and info sharing with other US government and industry partners for

the purposes of developing a database to help identify, analyze, and ultimately defeat [unusual aerial systems] threats." The reason I chose to say "Not Applicable" was simply that you *publish* a book; you don't *publish* a video, you *release* it. I always prided myself on communicating as precisely as possible.

A few days later, I received an email from the Department of Defense Office of Prepublication and Security Review (DoDOPSR), the government body that handles these requests. DoDOPSR understood we wished to make the videos available to partners in industry, that is, people we already worked with in aerospace and universities. DoDOPSR said they could not declassify this kind of media for release to a restricted audience. They urged us to change our request and instead request unrestricted release to make the videos public.

I wasn't expecting that. It felt like an early birthday present. This would ultimately give us the flexibility to decide who our partners were going to be.

"You'd be able to do whatever you want with them after that," they said.

Shortly after, the approval showed up in my inbox. DoDOPSR had officially stamped my Form 1910 with the following words: UNLIMITED DISTRIBUTION.

CHAPTER 20

THE THREE HEADS OF CERBERUS

We were at a loss. We had investigated numerous cases, conducted analysis, consulted top scientists, and come to historic realizations on behalf of the American government. Why was it so damn difficult to get the right people in the chain of command briefed? I felt a bit like the radar operator minutes before Pearl Harbor. Why wasn't anyone concerned about what *we* were seeing?

But then one day my phone rang, and the caller ID revealed it was from the front office of the secretary of defense, the very same office I needed to crack.

A week prior, I had given permission to Chris Mellon to share my name with some senior-level officials he knew who would be in a position to help Jay and me get to Mattis appropriately.

Well, I'll be damned, I thought. Chris made it happen!

I should not have gotten excited. I knew how this place worked. Chris's introduction kicked off what would end up being months of back-and-forth meetings with individuals who were highly placed in the Pentagon. The senior person I was dealing with by then—a SECDEF liaison—noted my comments and promised (yet again) to circle back. I understood their hesitation. The liaison had a hard time grasping the enormity of the issue and quickly deferred to two colleagues of his, a senior White House advisor named Brad Byers, and a CIA liaison officer I will call Shari Smith. They asked for reams of data. They asked to speak to our pilot witnesses. We brought in Fravor, Dietrich, and a radar operator. Then they wanted the reports, photographs, and anything else.

Yet, after all that, nothing got to Mattis. His three gatekeepers wanted to

provide the secretary a solution, not just a problem. I also learned that Brad was hesitant to brief Mattis until my office, OUSD(I), had a permanent appointment. Since Michael Vickers had left his position, the USD(I) was filled with either "acting" or temporary people. The position required a Senate-confirmed person and so the Pentagon was still searching for the right individual. A permanent person in the USD(I) position meant we could keep everyone informed. At the time I didn't like this rationale, but in hindsight, it was probably correct. Brad was a good man and as loyal to Mattis as I was. On one of these occasions, I told them point-blank, "Time is not on our side. We have to take action. Someone has to inform the secretary." I paused, calmed myself, and apologized. I then referenced my work in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, something that I had not expected or wished to speak of unless fate forced my hand. "I was in Kandahar with the secretary when he was Marine Expeditionary Unit Commander. I can't say that I know how he thinks. But my experience with him has taught me that he is a man who wants more information, not less."

Mattis was still quite new to his job; the press would be watching his every move. My chief contacts, Shari and Brad, did not want to put Mattis in an impossible position. If the press got wind of these meetings, they could ask Mattis directly in an open press briefing: "Mr. Secretary, is it true you were recently briefed to the reality of UAP and the dangers they may pose to our pilots?"

From there, the imagined scenarios only got worse:

"Mr. Secretary, do you believe in aliens?"

"Mr. Secretary, are we preparing for an alien invasion?"

We were moving in the right direction, but the big questions were always there. How do we get around the stigma and fear of the topic being made into a mockery, so that we can brief this information? How do we unwind eighty years, maybe more, of official denial?

I devised a plan of my own. Back in my office, I posed a question to *******. "What's the one thing, the *one* thing, that has prevented us time and time again from getting stuff done?"

Without batting an eye, ******* quipped, "Authority. We don't have enough authority to do what we need to do."

"BINGO!"

"And how do we get more authority?" I asked.

"With rank," he responded. I think he felt like I'd just launched an

impromptu game show.

"CORRECT!"

"But we can't just give ourselves a promotion . . ."

"We don't have to, because we have friends who are already there."

Not long after, ******* and I appeared in the office of Neill Tipton, my old boss. As always, he was friendly and humorous.

"What I'm going to tell you will sound a little strange," I said.

"Hearing that from you, Lue . . . nothing surprises me anymore," he said, laughing.

We laid out our plan. Neill would join AATIP and help support the effort. We would feed him the data, and the secretary's front office would give him the necessary cover and protection. (Brad and Shari agreed to this.) Neill had the requisite enthusiasm for the subject. He'd given us the benefit of his expertise in the past when we had investigated the Predator video, and he took the initiative to follow up on the case with an email. He was now among the top three senior officials in the OUSD(I), the equivalent of a three-star general.

All he had to do was say yes.

Neill sat back in his chair behind his new oak desk. "Only one condition," he said. "You have to stay on as advisor and—"

"I'm not going anywhere," I assured him.

Neill required the full briefing and something in writing. A few days later, I returned to Neill's office, gave him the briefing, and handed over a large folder with hard copies of UAP reports. It was several inches thick. I also gave him access to our share folder on the OUSD(I) classified share drive. All I needed now was the SECDEF office to sign a memo shifting AATIP's responsibilities to Neill.

Within a few days, I brokered a meeting between Neill, Brad, and Shari. I was confident that we were almost over the finish line. Everyone agreed that Neill would be the new UAP czar for DoD. That afternoon, I drafted a memo at the unclassified level and sent a copy to Neill and ******* for their review. Short and sweet, but enough for Neill to assume his new duty.

Neill read and accepted the contents of my memo, but he delayed signing it and said he would upon his return from a TDY—an official trip. And again, the secretary of defense was not aware. Once again, bureaucracy and stigma had made things difficult.

During this time, something shifted within me. I realized we had done all

we could. I had collected the evidence. I had fought to bring it to the top. I was exhausted.

On those long rides home, I mulled my options and grappled with my restlessness.

I had selflessly dedicated myself to the DoD, which had set me on my path and nurtured my career. The Pentagon was my lifeblood. My identity.

But I could not shake the feeling that I swam in a pool of rapidly setting concrete. They had refused to play ball on Interloper. They had stonewalled me on briefing the secretary. The Pentagon was content to maintain the status quo, to circle the drain endlessly talking, never acting on the intel. Meanwhile, we had very real national security threats posed by UAP. I knew that if the proper attention was not called to this matter, it could result in a national security failure eclipsing that of 9/11. All the while, the Legacy Program existed in the shadows, in possession of advanced technology made off-world by nonhuman intelligence, but seemingly no elected officials and no one at the Pentagon knew about it. Then there was the simple fact that the true nature of our reality—the fact that we are not alone in the universe—was being hidden from the American people and humanity at large. Say that out loud . . . it's insane and wrong.

I felt like I was in a *Twilight Zone* episode.

There had to be a better way.

Wargaming it with Jay and Chris Mellon, we realized that the only way to change the way the Pentagon was handling this was to get Congress to make them change. And as Mellon reminded us, the way to get Congress to pay attention was to take it to the streets and get the press involved.

But as government employees we could not speak to the press.

The way I saw it, I really only had two choices: (1) make peace with silence and sitting on humanity's biggest secret, leaving the American people and the rest of society in the dark and leaving a very real national security threat unaddressed, or (2) resign from a career I love in order to fulfill my duty to serve the interest of the people of the United States, and to do the right thing, by going public and revealing the truth about UAP to the American people. After all, that is who we served. Most government employees don't think of such a thing, nor know how to. We were taught that the government is the end-all, be-all. Yes, many of us dreamed of leaping to the private sector, but such moves typically meant transferring to something like a higher-paying career at a military contractor. One did not leave the

Pentagon to talk publicly about sensitive matters.

I couldn't ask any of my colleagues to sacrifice their careers. It had to be me. I was the senior guy at this point.

The truth had to be told and dealt with somehow. A quote by the great American patriot Samuel Adams leapt to mind: "For true patriots to be silent is dangerous." I would never in a million years violate my security oath. The damage inflicted by people such as Bradley (now Chelsea) Manning and, later, Edward Snowden arguably did more harm than good. Yes, the truth got out, but people lost their lives, and intelligence was compromised in the process.

How do we make Congress, the secretary of defense, and the American people aware of an issue without compromising classified information? If I could say enough at the unclassified level to open people's eyes to the facts, and make enough noise in the press to get Congress's attention, then Jay could use that momentum to move things forward inside the government. This would be the greatest challenge I could ever imagine. There was no precedent for what we wanted to pull off.

Running through a mental list of what was legal and not legal, I was confident that I could speak about our investigations and the national security threats posed by UAP without violating the numerous non-disclosure agreements (NDA) I signed when I joined the Pentagon. I managed sensitive classified programs for a good part of my career and knew what I could and could not say.

When you have a job that requires a top secret clearance, you quickly learn how to partition your mind, just like a hard drive, given that most of us live among noncleared people. The world in which I dwelled was either stamped classIfIed or unclassIfIed. If I stuck to the unclassified material, I stood a good chance of surviving the initial salvo.

I worried about the asymmetric warfare that would likely ensue. I expected a campaign of allegations questioning my integrity, my mental state, my performance, and my work ethic. If that didn't work, my enemies would take it to an even dirtier level. I had spent my life-time protecting my fellow Americans, my family, and our future. Now I was putting it all in jeopardy. I would lose my income and my ability to provide for my family. My pension would also be deferred.

Another quote came to mind. Thomas Paine once said, "The duty of a true Patriot is to protect his country from its government."

Knowing this would impact not only me but my wife and daughters, I had to discuss the situation with them. I started with Jennifer, of course.

"UFOs, Luis?" she said. "Seriously?"

"Well, UAP."

She was more than a little irritated. Of all the causes in all the world, why did I have to pick the one that sounded the craziest of them all?

I launched into a litany of my reasons. I was doing this for myself, for us, for our children, for every person now living, and for every child yet to be born. How could I look away now that I knew the truth?

Minutes turned to hours as Jennifer asked one question after another. Before long, we were talking about the mysteries of the universe, and how, say, the UAP issue might relate to our ideas about God.

Jenn was still mad. But something had shifted in our relationship that neither one of us appreciated at the time. After two decades of marriage in which we had been prohibited from speaking of my work, in the blink of an eye we bonded in a whole new way. It was hard, but it was beautiful. My old job had kept us apart. Quitting was about to bring us much closer.

"But what will we do?" Jenn said. "We need your salary."

So began one of the most torturous weekends of our marriage.

I understood where Jenn was coming from. She had a senior management job that she loved with the comptroller of Maryland's IT Division, which she had worked for years to achieve, but it still didn't pay enough to cover all our bills. Taylor and Alex would be heading to college soon and bills would go up. Since her accident, Jenn had become more focused on family than ever before. Keeping up with the Joneses, getting caught up in the trappings of the suburban life, now held little allure for her or me. But we still lived on the outskirts of one of the most expensive cities in the United States and we had significant bills.

Calmly, rationally, she asked a million questions.

"Why can't you wait until you land a decent job, and *then* quit?"

"I can't stay. Not anymore."

"But if you *quit* the Pentagon," she reminded me, "you can't touch your pension until you're sixty-two. If you wait, tough it out, you can start withdrawing at fifty-seven." I was only in my forties.

"It's not about money."

"But Lue, who walks away from a stable government job after twenty years without lining up something better first?"

“A man who can’t live with himself if he doesn’t.”

“You really want to do this, Luis?”

“I don’t want to. I have to.”

We shared the news with the girls over dinner. I explained that leaving the Pentagon was a hard thing to do but I knew in my heart it was the right thing to do.

“But are you retiring or *resigning*?” they wanted to know.

Resigning, I said. From this job only. Undoubtedly there would be another job or jobs, given that I was only in my midforties. I added that it might be a little tough in the short term, and not for the reasons they might expect.

“There’s a possibility some people are going to be saying bad things about me,” I told them frankly. “But we’re going to get through it. We’re going to be fine.”

In my heart, I knew the truth. It wasn’t going to be fine, and I was putting myself in a very precarious situation. I was prepared to do whatever I needed to do to make ends meet if I went public. I would interview in the DC area for a decent office job. Until something clicked, I could work retail if need be. Or I could get a job as an auto mechanic or work construction. My hands had never met an engine they could not rebuild or a house they could not renovate. Electrical, mechanical, plumbing, marine engines . . . I was comfortable doing all of it. I would do what I had to do in order to provide for my family. How many times in my childhood had I watched my father rise from the ashes to rebuild his life and his life savings? It was tough, but doable.

After my parents’ divorce, I visited my father for a long weekend in Immokalee, Florida, where he drove fruit trucks to the markets in Miami. A far cry from the five-star meals he served to Sarasota’s finest back when he and Mom ran their restaurant. After a long day, bouncing around in a ten-wheeler flatbed, we slept on the floor of his single-room trailer in the middle of a pig field. The trailer had no bedrooms, no kitchen, only a coffeemaker propped up on a paint bucket. The trailer was a hollowed-out hulk of steel lit by a single 40-watt lightbulb. At night I spotted pig snouts poking through the holes in the floorboards as they feasted on cockroaches.

Dad’s living situation terrified me, but it didn’t trouble him at all.

“Son, I used to live in Castro’s prisons,” he said. “*This* is a luxury for many men. I know you are not used to this because I gave you a good house

and good meals. Your value as a person is not what's around you, but what's *in* you. Someday you will learn this. Go to sleep, and know that this situation won't be like this forever."

He was right. My father saved his money, invested in real estate, and would one day rebuild his fortune to the point where he could live on a yacht.

The girls were concerned, certainly, but they showered me with love and affection. They could not have been more supportive. I don't think another man ever felt so lucky.

The choice was clear—we all deeply believed the American people deserved to know the truth and could handle the truth. Public disclosure was the only way forward, the only way for positive change. There was simply too much at stake. I had to resign from my job in protest and reveal the facts in the most public way possible, despite knowing the consequences to my reputation, credibility, and livelihood, and knowing those who didn't want me to go public would throw stones my way and try to undermine my reputation. It was the right thing to do.

Monday morning, Jenn met me at the front door as I was leaving for work. She grabbed me and held me tight.

"You're sure?" she said.

"If I don't do this, every day from now on you'll know that you're married to a fraud and I will know it too."

She nodded to indicate that she had felt the depth of my words. She leaned in and kissed me goodbye. "I love you, Luis," she said. "No matter what, we'll figure out a way to survive."

That morning, I carpooled with my old friend John Robert.

I drove us to work in my eighteen-year-old Cadillac. I'd bought it because I could see that it still had a lot of life in it, and I figured I deserved an inexpensive but comfortable ride for those long commutes. Long, sleek, and black, the car had been mistaken for a limousine numerous times in the big town. It was an endless source of amusement to my colleagues.

I waited for the right moment before saying, "I need to tell you something. I'm resigning."

He laughed. "Bullshit you are."

"I'm serious."

"Wait—you're not kidding?"

"No."

"Why?"

Quickly, I summarized it for him. Since he'd been privy to the details of AATIP, I could speak more freely to him than to my own wife. When I concluded, I shrugged. "So what do you think?"

"This . . . this is not good," he said. "I'll give you less than five percent chance of success. No one talks about this stuff. You're murdering yourself. Especially if you ever talk about AATIP. You're toast."

I stayed quiet.

"But if anyone can pull it off, it's you, Lue."

True to form, John detailed for me where the proverbial land mines would be. I appreciated his honesty about the tough road ahead, and his trust and faith in me. I had planned countless intelligence operations all over the globe, but I had never braved the swirling worlds of the media, the government, and the American public. And no one like me had ever publicly been a force working in opposition to all those who have hid the truth from the world for eighty years.

I remember, as a kid, huddling in my bed as my parents argued loudly in the room next door. Throwing things. It was pure chaos. Back then I had nothing but my make-believe force field to protect me. I was an adult now and didn't need my childhood force field anymore. I had something better: years of battle-hardened resilience, training, and discipline. The one thing I hated most was adversity, but I seemed to thrive in it.

As a kid, I realized that there comes a point where, no matter what happens, you're probably going to be beat up anyway. That's the point when you lose all fear. You are liberated; from that moment forward you can fight with confidence. Deep in my heart, I hoped *not* to fight DoD. After all, I was trying to do something for their own good. I wanted to save DoD from making a massive mistake. I wanted to save Mattis. I wanted to save DoD's reputation. I wanted to save DoD from itself. But if I am pushed, I will push back—hard.

I was hoping John was right: if anyone can pull it off, it's me. I was resolved. As I hit the gas, I had the feeling I was about to take a page from my wife's playbook: *Bring it on!*

After a few moments of thoughtful silence, John changed his opinion, now giving me 1 percent chance at success. A true friend, he was always brutally honest. He knew what I was up against.

At work, Jay Stratton and I made a plan that would go against all odds. A plan to bring about disclosure. I would resign and go public with the mission

of bringing as much attention and credibility to the issue as possible. Jay would stay with the government and use the momentum gained by the public attention to move the ball forward within the government and brief any and all officials who would no doubt suddenly be interested. They had to learn the truth, and Jay would be positioned to inform them on a classified level. And he'd be positioned to run whatever version of AATIP came next. I'd also help educate Congress and facilitate introducing them to credible military and IC members who'd had UAP encounters. We would continue to work together, from different sides of the fence, to bring about disclosure and look out for the best interest of the American people and, frankly, humanity at large.

The old saying "Teamwork makes the dream work" came to mind.

A few days later, Chris Mellon took to a parking lot somewhere inside the Beltway, where he met with a journalist he knew. Their conversation was brief, because everything they had to say to each other had already been said via mobile phones. Mellon handed over a padded envelope filled with CDs encoded with data. He had used his contacts at the Pentagon to get copies of the three unclassified UAP videos. Every step of this march to disclosure was completely legal, but someone would try their best to paint a different picture. By the letter of the law, the videos had been released to the American people the moment the Pentagon approved my Form 1910. Mellon's long service in the intelligence community meant he knew exactly where the videos had been tucked away and how to extract them.

The future was uncertain, but plans had been set in motion—for all of us.

CHAPTER 21

OUT OF THE AIRLOCK

My resignation was possibly the most open secret in the history of the Pentagon. The people I worked with—my staffers, my colleagues, and all my contractors—knew what was about to happen. Many of them joined me that morning in the Pentagon cafeteria. We enjoyed a long breakfast—my treat as a token of my appreciation—and said our farewells. Several of my contractors shed tears. I would teach them all one final lesson: how to leave with dignity.

I admit, it was all a bit surreal. I felt like I was about to pass through an airlock into the vastness and void of the unknown, never to return again. Everything I knew, worked for, and treasured was all being left behind.

I crafted two resignation letters, one for my chain of command and one to the secretary himself. The first letter was a matter of pro forma. My direct chain of command was not read-in to our program, so I only wrote the very bare minimum informing them of my intent to leave. I did not want to be responsible for an unauthorized disclosure. The second letter was addressed directly to Mattis and was far more detailed. I figured since his staff already knew about AATIP, he needed to know as well.

That afternoon, I submitted my formal resignation letter—handing a paper copy inside an envelope to a colleague to deliver to the secretary's office. The text of the letter was pointed, but I didn't think it was outrageously so. I took aim at the long tradition of silence and secrecy that I had come to despise.

> Mr. Secretary,
>
> It has been my sincere honor and pleasure to have served with some of America's finest men and women in both peacetime and in war. For over 22 years, I have been blessed to learn from, and work

with, world-class leadership, you certainly being among the very best.

With that in mind, bureaucratic challenges and inflexible mindsets continue to plague the Department at all levels. This is particularly true regarding the controversial topic of anomalous aerospace threats. Despite overwhelming evidence at both the unclassified and classified levels, certain individuals in the Department remain staunchly opposed to further research on what could be a tactical threat to our pilots, sailors, and soldiers, and perhaps even an existential threat to our national security. In many instances, there seems to be a direct correlation the phenomena exhibits with respect to our nuclear and military capabilities. The Department must take serious the many accounts by the Navy and other Services of unusual aerial systems interfering with military weapon platforms and displaying beyond-next-generation capabilities. Underestimating or ignoring these potential threats is not in the best interest of the Department no matter the level of political contention. There remains a vital need to ascertain capability and intent of these phenomena for the benefit of the armed forces and the nation.

For this reason, effective 4 October 2017, I humbly submit my resignation in hopes that it will encourage you to ask the hard questions: “who else knows?,” “what are their capabilities?,” and “why aren’t we spending more time and effort on the issue?” As I transition to a new chapter of my life, please know it has been an honor and privilege of a lifetime to serve with you. Rest assured, no matter where the path of life may lead me, I will always have the best interest of the Department and the American people as my guiding principle.

I turned in my credentials and departed forever the monolithic building that had shaped my career for more than twenty-two years. There was no value in hanging around, not to me, not to anybody. I had an appointment near the Pentagon Row shopping and entertainment district later that afternoon, so I had some time to kill. I headed over to the mall, adjacent to the Pentagon, to clear my head.

About an hour later, I got the call. On the other end I heard the somber voice of John Garrity, my immediate supervisor on the Guantanamo portfolio.

“Hey, Lue,” he said, “Garry Reid wants to see you immediately.”

I had kept our top boss Garry Reid out of the loop on anything pertaining to AATIP, for reasons mentioned earlier.

My heart sank. When his assistant patched him through, Reid flippantly asked, “What am I supposed to do with this letter, Lue?”

I had deliberately addressed my resignation letter to Secretary of Defense Mattis so no one in the Pentagon would be able to keep it from him.

“Sir, I suggest you provide it to whom it was addressed.”

“And say *what*!? What exactly do I say, Lue?”

“Sir, what you do with that letter is up to you. I did what I had to do, and you will do what you want to do. But I hope you turn my letter in to whom it was addressed.”

Angry beyond words, Reid took me to task for resigning. I could only assume his rage stemmed from the fact that he didn’t want to have to tell Mattis what had been going on.

“You need to come in and see me right away,” he said.

“Sir, I respect your position, but I am not sure that’s the best thing to do right now.” I knew that was a trap. If I set foot on Pentagon property, I was concerned that he would try to have me arrested or detained, just to harass me. He ran security and law enforcement for the DoD. I would be like a chew toy thrown to a pack of wolves.

When I didn’t take the bait, he said, “Lue, you realize that if you do this, I will have no option but to tell people that you’re acting crazy. You don’t want this affecting your security clearance, do you? You still want a job somewhere, don’t you?” Reid also controlled security clearances for all of DoD, including mine. Whether or not he intended to give me friendly advice, I interpreted it as a threat to my reputation, my career, and my ability to ever take a job that would require a security clearance.

“Sir, with all due respect, I am not crazy, but if you feel you need to take action like that, that is certainly well within your authority. I am not looking for a fight. I am looking for a solution.”

He hung up, insisting that I speak with his assistant to lock in a calendar invite.

I wouldn’t be seeking that invite. I didn’t work for him anymore; I was a civilian. I owed Reid nothing. If I stepped into that building, I was sure he would figure out a way to extract a statement from me that he could later use against me. I would not play Reid’s game. I had bigger fish to fry.

Several people loyal to me who were still at OUSD(I) told me that Reid planned to launch a criminal inquiry with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI). Within the Pentagon, AFOSI investigates internal matters pertaining to counterintelligence.

Reid had already seized my computers and files from my office and questioned every one of my employees. When that bore little fruit, Reid cast a wider net, questioning my friends and colleagues. One friend phoned to tell me she'd been cornered by a Reid underling who confided, "We are going to nail Lue to the floor." Reid had embarked on a scorched-earth policy.

One more task remained on my docket, and I was solidly in "Bring it on!" mode. Chris Mellon and Jim Semivan awaited me in the lobby of a hotel not far from the Pentagon. Hal Puthoff arrived shortly after, as did the individual we had all gathered to meet: an independent investigative journalist by the name of Leslie Kean, whom Chris had arranged for us to meet.

Leslie had been a longtime reporter for major metropolitan newspapers and was very interested in the UAP topic. Years earlier, she'd written a well-received book about military encounters with UAP and had won a major court victory against NASA over the release of documents relating to a 1965 UAP incident in Kecksburg, Pennsylvania. She had known Hal for years; he had done a blurb for her book prior to release.

I was terrified. I had always been taught to avoid the media. Never tell them anything. In fact, I spent the last few years reinforcing that notion within the Guantanamo Bay portfolio. Now here I was about to talk to a reporter about my "other job." I hoped she wouldn't ask anything of significance. I had already drawn the boundaries in my mind.

Under no circumstances will I discuss anything classified. And at no time will I provide names of other individuals without their permission unless they are already in the public eye.

Meeting with Kean lasted an exhausting four hours. To be sitting among Mellon, Puthoff, and Semivan as they spoke of their desire to smash the wall of secrets and lies invigorated me, but I was still extremely concerned about whether it could be pulled off.

I am certain this was the first time Kean learned of AATIP's existence. That meant I was the Man Who Quit the Pentagon over UAP. Kean was dogged in her questions but respectful. I answered the questions that didn't break any of my rules, and politely declined the few that did.

Kean was fascinated that so many former high-ranking government

officials had agreed to come forward. She wondered if this would herald a new era of openness on the topic.

Lady, I thought, don't hold your breath. It will be a long, drawn-out process, akin to pulling teeth from a hungry alligator. But I told her that I was ready to talk to the public, and just needed the right platforms. I remember a twinkle in her eyes as her wheels started spinning.

That week I left, I had various conversations with friends about jobs I could take to pay the bills while engaging the public. Numerous colleagues had suggested tech firms and military contractors in the region who wished to speak to me.

Chris Mellon, Hal, and Semivan urged me to consider a different path. If you want to reach the American people on this issue, they said, you need to connect with the media. They had an idea for a job that would give me income and a platform to educate the public. They had aligned themselves with the organization that rock star Tom DeLonge and Jim Semivan had put together, called To The Stars Academy (TTSA), and they planned to pursue a triple directive for UAP disclosure: fresh approaches to UAP science and engineering, educating laymen and journalists, and generating film/TV/publishing content about the UAP phenomena, based on true stories, all to educate the public and put an end to the stigma. That appealed to me. We needed as much serious public discussion of the issue as possible. Lawmakers would never budge unless pressed by the American people. Jim said TTSA could use my knowledge of the UAP topic and my help setting up security, and encouraged me to meet Tom.

I went home, poured a couple of glasses of wine, and had a long talk with Jenn. When we were alone without the girls, I told her there was a new job I was interested in.

"Do you remember the band Blink-182?"

She looked confused. "You want to be a roadie?"

I laughed, then explained the opportunity with TTSA.

A couple of days later, I took the Caddy into the city to a Hilton across from the Pentagon. As I strode across the lobby, my prospective employer rose to offer his hand.

Tom DeLonge, the front man of Blink-182, was only a few years younger than me but looked decades younger, thanks to his dark mop of hair and boyish good looks. Massively tall, he appeared out of place in his business suit. He was the sort of guy who was more at home in a rumpled T-shirt and a

pair of jeans. He had traveled from California to meet me.

I frankly had no idea where this was headed. Of all the scenarios I envisioned at this stage in my life, hanging with a rock star entrepreneur in an upscale hotel was certainly not one of them.

Tom was the quintessential artist, and every time he applied his creative instincts to a project, he struck gold. Since leaving music behind in 2015, he'd turned his attention to a passion that he was obsessed with since childhood. He believed in his heart that earth was being visited regularly by UAP. He wanted to use his celebrity to expose that truth to the world.

Like all UAP buffs, he assumed that the government knew more than it was letting on. He was right, of course. To address this, he had put together a group of informed ex-government types to align with his cause, creating the best UAP brain trust ever assembled in the private sector. His organization would be a "public benefit" corporation, structured exactly as prescribed by the Securities and Exchange Commission. Investors would pony up money to fund the entertainment/publishing piece, which, if successful, would fund the research component. For the record, I was never part of the board of directors, so I had no visibility into the nuances of the corporate structure plan. I was simply an employee of the company.

Tom had previously crisscrossed the country on a learning tour, meeting with various sympathetic former officials. In addition to Hal, Mellon, and Semivan, John Podesta, who had served as chief of staff to President Clinton, counselor to President Barack Obama, and campaign manager to Hillary Clinton, was involved. Podesta has long said that one of his regrets was not insisting on disclosure of UAP evidence when he was in the White House. DeLonge's advisory board included Steve Justice, a highly respected aerospace engineer who'd spent thirty-one years working for Lockheed Martin's highly secretive Skunk Works; my friend and colleague from Stanford University, Dr. Garry Nolan; and Dr. Norm Kahn, a former CIA expert on biological weapons.

Tom was passionate, convinced of his beliefs, friendly, and sincere. Everything he said was music to my ears. His operation seemed like it could be the perfect bullhorn to reach people who didn't know UAP were real, and he made me an offer to join TTSA as chief of security and special programs. With the folks he had, TTSA would inevitably be developing technology that would need to be locked down—I had obviously done that in the past. And of course, I would work with them to take the UAP topic to the people. The

salary offered was much less than I was earning at the Pentagon. To do this, Tom insisted that I relocate to California. He had a press conference lined up and planned to announce his team, so he wanted an answer quickly.

I mulled it over. I ventured forth every morning to see what other job offers I could drum up. I didn't have much time to lock something down, because Jenn and I only had so much in our cash reserves to float. I needed income to keep us afloat while I mapped out my plan for public engagement. Eventually I concluded that working with TTSA was the best way to achieve my objective and earn an income at the same time.

When Jenn came home, I poured a couple glasses of wine to share my news. She cut to the chase: "How much are they paying you?"

I gave her the figure. Tom also offered to kick in some stock. Jenn reminded me our bills were slated to rise with the girls heading to college.

"You really have to be in California?"

"It's a condition of the job."

"Where then?"

DeLonge was a proud son of Poway, near San Diego. TTSA's planned location was in Encinitas, about thirty minutes north of the city, along the coast.

It is never easy to ask the one you love to make a sacrifice for you. But that's exactly what I had just done. Jenn and I stuck together. I wasn't going solo. If I took the job, it would mean Jenn giving her job up for . . . what, exactly? My dream of transparency and disclosure? That was my "cause"—not hers. For twenty-odd years, we never talked about our jobs, only what the salaries could do for our family. With her usual loving support, I accepted the job, and a short time later, TTSA was officially announced with me on board.

Later that month, I left our house for a short trip to Philadelphia to meet again with Leslie Kean, this time with her longtime colleague and friend Ralph Blumenthal. After our prior conversation in DC, Kean had devoted two of her Huffington Post columns to UAP, focusing primarily on the "extraordinary" development that was TTSA.

Now it was time for the bigger story I wanted to tell. Following our first four-hour meeting, she had immediately contacted Blumenthal, a contributor and former staff reporter for the *New York Times,* to see if he was interested. Ralph was a veteran newsman who was curious about the phenomena. For several years he had been quietly working on a biography of the late Dr. John Mack, a Harvard psychiatrist who treated and extensively interviewed UAP

experiencers, who were often traumatized people who claimed to have been abducted by aliens, or at least encountered aliens in person.

The two reporters interviewed me in detail about UAP (which they still called UFOs at that time) and AATIP for a *Times* story. This would be an unprecedented and historic opportunity to reach and educate the public.

Mainstream outlets like the *Times* stubbornly avoided UAP stories. As long as the stigma made "real" scientists and experts think UAP were the domain of crackpots, the topic would be fodder for the *National Enquirer*. The *Times* taking the story seriously was a tectonic shift.

I met Leslie in a bar across from the train station, then we walked together to meet Ralph on the street. I noticed two individuals with tight military-style haircuts in different parts of the street as we strolled. I was certain we were being observed. They displayed the classic signs. They were most likely an AFOSI surveillance team, just not their A-Team.

With a few more twists and turns (something I learned in countersurveillance school), we came across the lobby of a hotel that afforded a large window to view the street. "Let's go in here," I suggested. One of the surveillance guys walked into the lobby, only to discover that we were staring right at him and Leslie had just snapped his picture. He scurried away.

Both Ralph and Leslie now knew someone at the Pentagon was gunning for me. All month, friends had phoned to warn me that someone had launched a campaign to damage my credibility within the Pentagon and beyond. One of my colleagues called to report: "Lue, they're saying you lied about your assignments to *this* unit or *that* unit. I had to remind them that I was there and served with you!" Luckily I have honest and loyal friends.

Over the next few months, the move to the west coast consumed my family's attention. Taylor was staying behind for college. Alex would be uprooted and finish her senior year at a high school in California. We were busy, obsessed, excited, and a little nervous.

After the Pentagon Christmas party that year, I was told that during the event, some aides pulled aside their boss, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, to share with him some concerning news. I was told the conversation went like this:

"Sir, the *New York Times* is running a front-page story in the Sunday paper saying that we have a secret program investigating UAP. They are asking why Lue resigned."

Mattis said, "What do you mean, Lue resigned?"

“Lue’s no longer with the DoD, sir.”

Mattis was taken aback. “When did Lue resign?”

“Uh, two months ago, sir.”

Apparently, Garry Reid had swept my resignation under the rug, hoping he would never need to reveal my departure to Mattis.

Mattis was pissed. I am sure that’s the last headache he needed. Truthfully, I feel guilty, even now, that he had to learn of my departure that way.

The year was almost over, and every time I spoke with Leslie Kean, she assured me the *Times* story would publish “soon.” I heard the word *soon* so often that I fretted that her editors had been scared off by someone. Then one of her colleagues, the reporter Helene Cooper, phoned and confided that she had met with the now-retired senator Harry Reid, who had unabashedly corroborated his and his colleagues’ involvement in funding the original program that led to AATIP and my leadership role. It was a sweet moment of vindication for me. I was going public and Harry Reid had my back.

A reporter named Bryan Bender was also working on a story for *Politico*. Chris Mellon was the brainchild of that effort. I met Bryan once or twice over coffee in Annapolis. He was a very shrewd reporter who knew the ins and outs of the Pentagon better than most people who worked there. He had a huge pool of sources to tap into, although he never revealed any of them to me. Where Leslie and company seemed more interested in the UAP aspect, Bryan seemed more interested in the national security aspect and potential threat. Bryan asked all the right questions, and some really hard ones. A few times I had to politely decline. In a strange way, I think Bryan already knew the answers to the questions he was asking me. He reminded me of a counterintelligence officer conducting a light interrogation. Except Bryan had the decency to buy me a cappuccino. Bryan didn’t come across as a “UAP believer.” Rather, he seemed interested in the Pentagon having a program that wasn’t ever disclosed to the public or Congress, but I could be wrong.

Early Saturday morning, December 16, 2017, I took Jenn for breakfast at the popular Double T Diner in Annapolis. As I stared down at my plate—three eggs over easy, bacon, and hash browns—I slipped into a moment of self-reflection.

I was thinking about what the next day would bring. Early that morning, a little birdie had told me that by tomorrow, both stories would be out. I felt like I was at the Last Supper. If I had only an inkling of what might transpire,

Jenn had none.

"Enjoy it," I said.

"The breakfast?"

"No, *this*. Our anonymity. Today is the last day of life as we know it."

"Don't you think you are being a little melodramatic?"

"No," I said.

The news exploded that afternoon. The *New York Times* broke the news online and was followed seconds later by *Politico*, then the *Washington Post*. Then every news platform in the world seemed to pick it up.

The *Times* stories appeared the following day on the cover of the print edition of the Sunday paper. They ran two articles, written by Leslie Kean, Ralph Blumenthal, and Helene Cooper. Their front-page story revealed the existence of AATIP—that is, a secret program investigating UAP—and my role. Inside the newspaper, a second story interviewed Dave Fravor and Jim Slaight and revealed details of the Tic Tac incident in 2004. The online story also included links to two of the unclassified UAP videos, which were posted on TTSA's YouTube page: the FLIR (aka Tic Tac) video and the GIMBAL video. (They released the GoFast video some months later.)

That's right, the *New York Times* released legit UAP videos in a cover story.

The articles quoted Chris Mellon, Hal Puthoff, me, and some folks from the Pentagon. All of the articles revealed my involvement in AATIP. The *Politico* piece in particular spelled out that the Pentagon's spokesperson, Dana White, had confirmed my role in the program. The articles also quoted my resignation letter. They traced the history of UAP investigations, and they unfurled descriptions of unusual aircraft sighted by pilot witnesses.

Calls flooded our home from CBS, ABC, NBC, CNN, PBS, Fox, MSNBC, etc. Jennifer was shocked that reporters found her mobile number, which had always been private. Even our daughter Alex started getting calls from reporters wanting to talk to me. Then the foreign journalists started ringing. The Elizondo house became a zoo.

It was a truly unprecedented amount of UAP information to drop into the world's lap in a single morning. Millions of people all over the world watched the videos.

That said, I did have some issues with each of the articles. The articles did not explain AAWSAP/AATIP, which would go on to cause confusion for years. Also, all of the articles played it a little too safe. For example, the Dave

Fravor/Tic Tac article in the *Times* opened with a disclaimer, which read in part, “Experts caution that earthly explanations often exist for such incidents, and that not knowing the explanation does not mean that the event has interstellar origins.” My colleagues and I thought that was absurd. The headline should have been “We are not alone!”

I had anticipated headlines that focused on the threat: “UAP Are Real and Present a National Security Threat.” Instead the editors at the news outlets emphasized the stodgy fact that the US government had secretly studied UAP via AATIP. Burying the lede was an understatement.

I told myself that when you have a message to share with the world, any press is good press. I’m sure my enemies in the Pentagon hoped the story would die, and me in the process. But in the coming week, momentum built and news platforms all over the world picked up the story.

While waiting in the greenroom at CNN prior to an on-camera interview, Jenn and I were approached by my old boss, the legendary general James Clapper, a former undersecretary of defense for intelligence, former head of Air Force intelligence, and former director of national intelligence. He was there to give remarks on other breaking news. Clapper had been one of my upper-level supervisors, in what I considered the golden era of OUSD(I), when people were happy and the mission was their focus. God, I missed Jim and his leadership.

He greeted us warmly, saying how surprised he was that the Pentagon admitted it had a UAP program, and that he was proud of me. Honestly, Jim Clapper acknowledging me at all made *me* proud.

Media attention is a double-edged sword, as I would soon find out. Jenn’s boss asked if she was related to me, and I started getting “noticed” everywhere I went. For a former intelligence officer, this is the worst feeling of all.

In reaction to the press, Garry Reid initiated an inquiry through the AFOSI to determine how the UAP videos had been released. That investigation would drag on well into spring. Eventually, they found no impropriety in my actions.

Our plan was working. My going public caused Congress to pay attention and Jay started getting requests for briefings from members of Congress who previously would have never been aware of the facts, due to the stigma and layers of bureaucracy. Congress was finally getting aware and engaged. Jay, Chris, and I all funneled credible members of the military and intelligence

community who had knowledge of UAP to Congress. Military pilots who had encountered UAP, and the data supporting what they saw, made the most impact on Congress at first. When you have a Top Gun Navy fighter pilot with years of experience, a trained observer, someone we trust to fly an $80 million airplane with live weapons in US airspace, telling Congress what they encountered was not man-made and we couldn't defend against it, it makes an impression.

Meanwhile, Neill got cold feet about taking my place at AATIP—something I wouldn't have expected from him—and began to backpedal, telling people that he knew nothing about AATIP, its focus, or my involvement. I heard this through several sources at the Pentagon. Maybe Neill detected the anti-AATIP backlash, and he simply wanted to avoid the crossfire. Or, since he had just been promoted, he felt compelled to take the safe route and lie low. Either way, I was disappointed that my friend chose to do what he did, especially given the vast amounts of emails and witnesses who knew Neill was slated to take over AATIP when I left. But regardless, Jay was there to run point and move the ball upfield inside the government. As history shows, there was no one who could have done it better than him.

Sometime shortly thereafter, someone in OUSD(I) allegedly authorized the complete deletion of all my electronic files, folders, and emails, under the justification that they had "no historic value." Or so claimed a Freedom of Information Act response from the Pentagon itself. If true, this was troubling, because my files had long been singled out for careful preservation by a court order, not due to UAP, but because of the work I'd done on Guantanamo Bay. This protective order had been in place for some time, signed by a judge. My emails and files had been flagged as evidence in a criminal prosecution of those criminally charged for being responsible for 9/11. Everyone knew that my files were earmarked for protection, no matter what. If they really destroyed them, they must have been so afraid of the content of those files that they were willing to break the law and jeopardize the entire 9/11 case to keep people from learning what we knew about UAP.

In January 2018, Jenn and I took our daughters out to California to search for a temporary place to live. Back home in Maryland, as I made arrangements to ship our possessions, I could not shake the feeling that everything fresh, challenging, and new lay before us.

I was anxious to hit the road. In our youth, Jenn and I had been military nomads, traveling wherever in the world I was stationed. My Pentagon job

had marked the beginning of an unusual period of stability for us. As parents of two daughters, we could not have found a better place to live than magical Kent Island. We hoped our move to California would bring good things.

CHAPTER 22

ALL THE SMALL THINGS

All along, Chris Mellon and I planned to take the disclosure battle to Congress, but we knew that course of action would take time and we had more work to do educating the American public. Now we had just been handed a great platform for doing that.

The History Channel wanted to do a show with the TTSA team that would put seasoned investigators in the field, interviewing exmilitary personnel about their UAP encounters. Maybe, if we got lucky, we would reach a ton of people about the phenomenon.

Chris and I had only one condition for agreeing to be a part of the show: it had to be authentic. No artificial drama or conspiracy theories, no scripts, and only current or former government witnesses. The goal could not be *putting on a show*. It had to simply be about sharing credible eyewitness testimony with the public.

Filming *Unidentified* was surreal for me. Less than a year after I'd left the Pentagon, we had a TV show about UAP. What an absolutely insane turn of events.

The show premiered in May 2019 and was well received. It certainly opened a lot of minds, but I was soon sucked back into the drama of my old life. Friends called to give me a heads-up about a fresh attempt by my detractors to smear my name. Reporters phoned to ask why spokes-people in the Pentagon could not or would not corroborate some small factoid about my employment record. Each time this happened, it made me look like a liar with something to hide. It was clear that the Pentagon was backtracking on their previous statements about me and AATIP and trying to put the proverbial cat back into the bag at any cost.

I received a call one day from an agent with the Defense Counter-intelligence Security Agency (DCSA), which Garry Reid oversaw. The agent

referenced allegations that I had improperly declassified the UAP videos. I had to remind the young agent that double jeopardy is a no-no, and that AFOSI had investigated and adjudicated the matter favorably. I forwarded the AFOSI investigation summary for her to review. Several days later, she called again.

“Mr. Elizondo, the concern that has been raised now involves the release of those three videos.”

This was one of the few moments when I allowed myself to lose my temper.

“Ma’am,” I said, “this is not directed at you but whoever will be reviewing my file or listening to this recording. Let me make myself crystal clear: I know exactly where this is coming from and from who. Let me remind you that I too know something about investigations, the law, and my constitutional rights. I also know I have already been cleared of this. If you continue what you’re doing, I will take legal action and tell anyone who will listen in the media what exactly is going on here. I went to war to defend this Constitution and I will do it again.”

The phone calls stopped. This type of bullying, what we call administrative terrorism, goes on all the time. Most people don’t know their rights and get taken advantage of.

Shortly after, I filed an official complaint with the DoD’s office of the Inspector General (IG). I was stunned when representatives of the IG’s office contacted me shortly after to let me know that I might be called as a witness in the future on an entirely different matter. Later that month I noticed a small gray drone flying over my house. I lived in the middle of nowhere and yet someone was clearly interested in knowing more about me. As time progressed, others I worked with were also harassed, and the same type of drone was used to spy on them.

It had taken time for a female DoD employee’s complaint to work its way through the proper channels, but the IG was now investigating Garry Reid for a litany of issues that would later be made public. When they started asking questions, I told them the truth.

But then soon after, a targeted fake news story popped up online. It claimed, *There is no discernible evidence that Luis Elizondo ever worked for a government UAP program* . Obviously, this wasn’t true, but whoever put the journalist up to it knew that fake news gets repeated regardless of it being fake. The timing of the article seemed calculated to disrupt or damage the

launch of the History Channel show and felt like the work of Garry Reid.

Pentagon spokesperson Dana White, who had confirmed my leader role in AATIP for the *Politico* article, had left the Pentagon. The Pentagon's spokesperson at the time, Christopher Sherwood, suddenly denied I had any involvement in AATIP. I had heard rumblings of such moves against me brewing for months from friends on the inside, but this article made it real. On behalf of the Pentagon, Sherwood told the reporters, "Mr. Elizondo had no responsibilities with regard to the AATIP program."

Jay got an email from the Pentagon's public affairs office saying that they planned to tell press that I was never involved with AATIP. He replied that it would be wrong of them to do that and said it wasn't true, but they ran with the fake and damaging narrative anyway.

I phoned Sherwood directly at the Pentagon. The longer we spoke, the more transparent he became. I sketched out my dilemma. It didn't matter that the Pentagon had vouched for me back in 2017. As long as I was in the public eye, reporters would routinely vet my background, and among other things, Sherwood told reporters that the three UAP videos had been cleared for research purposes only, *not* public dissemination.

While not apologizing, Sherwood indicated that he was not happy with the way my situation was being handled within DoD. He admitted he knew very well about my role at AATIP, but forces within the building instructed him not to admit it. For the record, I don't hold Sherwood accountable for his actions. I suspect he was just doing what he was told.

Later I learned that even Brad Byers in the SECDEF's office had called Sherwood expressing his concern over the story told by the Pentagon. Byers warned Sherwood that way too many people in senior positions knew of my role in AATIP, that the Pentagon was backing itself into a corner.

Mattis resigned his post in January 2019 due to differences with the Trump administration and went on to suffer the ignominy of being mocked on social media. With Mattis gone, the AATIP narrative was reframed to portray me as a fabricator. As a result, the Pentagon kept lying when asked about my employment record.

When an official source tells a reporter that you never worked in the capacity in which you claim you did, that journalist is going to think he's landed the scoop of a lifetime, instead of wondering if he's being force-fed a steaming pile of manure.

Not only was the public being fed fake news, but journalists were

unknowingly serving it up; even public-facing information sites were manipulated. Shortly after, I was told to look at my Wikipedia page, which had been updated erroneously. The profile had omissions and many inaccurate points stated as facts. I remember thinking, This is absurd, but I'll just update it. It's Wikipedia, after all. But someone had somehow locked down the page and no one was able to correct it. And of course, all this fake news was spread on social media, and the powers that be threw gasoline on the fire.

Unfortunately, one doesn't have to look hard to find evidence of the Pentagon intentionally misinforming the media and the public. As someone who served my country, it was heartbreaking, to say the least, to know that people within the Pentagon were consciously acting in bad faith to hurt me, all because I was telling the truth.

With all this happening, I had to defend myself. Chris Mellon and I had begun to engage people on Capitol Hill in an effort to make change in Congress. I couldn't have people lying about my record to representatives and senators. In an ideal world, I would get an attorney to escalate my defense, but I couldn't afford it.

California will never win any prizes for being an affordable state. Months after we moved west, I phoned Tom with the news that we had found a house we wanted to buy, but California was very pricy, so "before I sink the majority of my life savings into this house, I really need to know—straight up—is my income safe and secure?" Tom did not let me finish the sentence. He swore that my salary was secure. We bought the house, and a few months later, without warning, TTSA cut my salary in half. They said it was temporary, due to "corporate restructuring," but it didn't matter. We hemorrhaged cash, digging deeper and deeper into our savings to pay college tuition and keep the roof over our heads. What the hell had I done? Out of a sense of outrage and injustice, I had abandoned a secure, longtime job to pursue the cause of UAP disclosure. I felt I was making a difference, but my family and I were now in a tough spot.

For the record, I don't blame Tom. I believe Tom was forced to make some financial decisions that were likely beyond his control.

We thought about selling the house quickly and downsizing, but we also hoped my TTSA salary would bounce back, so instead we rented the house out immediately and moved into our RV with our two dogs. Our youngest daughter, Alex, had returned home to Maryland to finish out her last year of

high school among friends. We parked the RV at another property—a horse farm whose owners had a small barn and agricultural hangar available. We had rusted well water to drink, electricity strung from a pole, and we dug our own septic tank. I thought, Wow—has it really come to this?

Jenn got a job at Target stocking shelves to bring in extra income. Stress and physical activity exacerbated the neurological issues and thoracic outlet syndrome stemming from her being run over by a car nearly a decade earlier. Repetitive hand and arm movements soon became a painful chore. She circled back and forth between doctors, trying various medications, to no avail. Medical bills were piling up.

When Covid hit, the office at TTSA was shut down and I worked from the comforts of our RV home. Every afternoon, I stowed my day's work so we could use the kitchen table for dinner.

In July 2020, after months of this insanity, Jenn said, "Are you going back to the office?"

"Not till the pandemic is over, no."

"So why are we still in this state?"

She had a point. All over the planet, millions were rethinking their options. Why shouldn't we?

I threw my hands up, gesturing at the cluttered RV and our stuff beyond its windows. "What do we do with all our stuff?"

She leaned across the dinette table. "Luis, our house has wheels."

We quickly unfurled and studied a KOA map. We narrowed down potential states, using the following parameters: no state income tax, cheap cost of living, very few people, no large cities. We decided to take a weekend and drive to one of the mountain states. We stopped in a few different towns, not falling in love with any of them. Along the way, we stopped in a gorgeous small town near a mountain range to get gas.

"This is it!" we both said simultaneously. We had found our new home. Soon after that, we happily settled our RV at a lovely campground that actually had a working septic system and crystal-clear water. Covid made home prices in California go up in value big-time, so we were grateful we had not sold our house yet. Selling it now would be great for us. We'd get all our money out and make some too, then downsize. We got excited, but then we learned we couldn't tell our renters to leave during Covid.

Shortly after, I received an unpleasant Christmas present. Just a few days before Christmas, I got a call from Tom, who was friendly but blunt. Our

business relationship was over. Despite all our successes, the business had not brought in the money he expected or needed. Tom and I had done beautiful work together. The second season of *Unidentified* had aired and been well received like the first season. The show escalated the conversation about UAP.

I wish things had gone differently, but I give Tom credit for his role in the disclosure movement. Our conversation ended with a mix of regret and excitement. Another chapter closed.

When I resigned from the Pentagon in 2017, I had jumped at the opportunity to join TTSA because I thought I needed the platform to spread my message and rejoin Hal, Jim, and Chris. A few days later I began to realize the work we had done now allowed us to be our own platforms. Also, I still had value inside government, and I took a consultancy with a small aerospace firm to bring in income.

Meanwhile, Chris Mellon was working his relationships on the Hill and setting the stage for our next move, as our battle for disclosure continued. Chris, Hal, and Steve Justice also soon moved on from TTSA.

One day a call came from DC that put my next chapter in motion. “I work for Congressman X,” the caller said. “We really respect what you’ve been doing. When can you be in DC again?”

CHAPTER 23

THE WAR PLAN

I stood at the entrance of the Longworth House Office Building in Washington, DC, a gleaming structure of marble and limestone rising just south of the Capitol. Ever since leaving the Pentagon, these trips back felt heady, thrilling, and a little nerve-racking.

I was about to meet with staffers who worked for a congressional representative. Now, certainly, over the years, I had met with elected officials, such as our longtime benefactor, Senator Harry Reid, but this felt different. I was here to talk about UAP at *their* invitation.

I wouldn't have made it this far without Chris Mellon. He knew like the back of his hand this stretch of buildings where our lawmakers kept their offices.

Mellon and I remained close from the day I briefed him. The word *commitment* personified him. Ever since learning the truth, Chris felt compelled to see this cause to the end.

Chris had grown up fascinated by the possibility of extraterrestrial life, based upon a personal experience which he rarely shared, but he'd carefully suppressed that wonder and excitement as an adult and intelligence professional. But now he was gratified to discover that the young people who worked on the Hill shared the fascination he had felt in his youth. The more he met with congressional aides these days, the more he found them extremely interested.

Chris recognized the vital role that Congress could play in advancing the UAP issue, so we and Jay had made a multiyear strategy, a war plan of sorts, to educate Congress and eventually legally address the hurdles that faced disclosure.

The first step of the strategy would be to engage key professional staff on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) and the Senate Armed

Services Committee (SASC) as well as members of Congress. Due to the stigma and political risk politicians were concerned with, we decided to focus on the growing UAP risks to flight safety, as well as the historic lack of transparency from the executive branch, going back to the 1940s. If Congress and the key staffs could be made aware of the facts, they might be motivated to achieve lasting change via new laws and expanded oversight.

Being a former deputy staff director of the Senate Intelligence Committee himself, Chris uniquely understood the value of a legislative strategy and congressional oversight. Unfortunately, few in Congress had any real previous understanding of the UAP issue and generally saw it as an odd "nonissue" for kooks and as politically risky.

We would seek to build advocacy with both sides of Congress, but we first gained particular momentum with senior staff members of the two committees.

With the help of our growing support base, we labored away at shifting the conversation about UAP in Congress. We relentlessly worked to uncover credible eyewitnesses of UAP, specifically intelligence and military officers, whom we could invite to share their testimony with senators, representatives, and various congressional committees. For every witness we brought forward, there were several who wouldn't speak to Congress due to the nondisclosure agreements they had signed with various intelligence agencies and branches of the military. Those who had wanted the UAP topic kept hidden from the public since the 1940s had done a damn good job of overusing the classification system to classify things that shouldn't be classified and getting witnesses to sign scary NDAs. The witnesses we met with who were afraid to speak to Congress genuinely feared being sent to jail or killed.

We also needed the DoD and other departments and agencies to provide more data and analysis. The media, which can be temperamental and fickle, would have to be firmly on board. Somehow we would need to gain the cooperation of friendly foreign nations as well, since they had collected a vast amount of data too. Last but not least, we needed to engage the public and make them aware, bring them into the conversation. Without their support, neither the media nor Congress would be motivated to do very much.

We called our plan the Five Pillars of Engagement.

We identified key members of the media who covered national security issues and were open to the idea of UAP and learning about who stood in the

way of a national security issue.

Meanwhile, Jay and I worked our network of friends in the military branches, FBI, CIA, and even the Department of Energy.

As we made progress outside and inside the government, leadership in Navy intelligence, who understood the national security threats related to UAP and now felt public and congressional pressure to do something about it, tasked Jay with quietly building out a whole-of-government interagency task force, a program with more authorities than AATIP ever had. So Jay started putting that together, handpicking his members/reps from all the intelligence agencies and civilian-led agencies, from the FBI to the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) to NASA to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Once it was put together, this would go on to became the Pentagon's UAP Task Force. Jay being positioned to escalate and elevate the issue like this was exactly what we hoped for. The plan was working.

Jay needed a rep from Space Force (USSF), but that agency was still getting set up at the time and didn't have a UAP program, so we brainstormed a way to get past this hurdle. Our solution was that I should try to be a consultant for USSF to help them build their UAP effort and serve the UAP Task Force Jay was building. After some friends connected me with USSF leadership, they expressed an interest and concern with UAP, although they were not ready to tell the world. Soon after that, I started working as a contractor for USSF on the UAP front and getting their unofficial help behind the scenes on my public efforts while also contributing to Jay's UAP Task Force.

After a couple of years of Jay quietly building the UAP Task Force behind the scenes, the secretary of defense announced the UAP Task Force and named Jay as its first director.

It was a proud moment. I couldn't believe how well our plan was working, but we were just getting started, and with each win came more pushback.

From the moment the UAP Task Force became official, the Legacy Program started quietly pushing back on Jay behind the scenes, creating one bureaucratic hurdle after another for him, the task force, and everyone involved.

Chris leveraged the long list of friends he used to work with when he was a senior staffer for Senator Bill Cohen. Many years earlier, when Chris had served on Cohen's staff, he was responsible for drafting and proposing

legislation. Back then, Chris was one of the founding authors and champion of the SOCOM bill, which established the United States Special Operations Command, charged with implementing key aspects of the missions of the various branches of the US military.

Everyone in the military and on the Hill loves the idea *now*, but back in the day Chris had to fight long and hard against the proposal's opponents. Certain commanders thought they had everything already covered and didn't take kindly to him fiddling with the status quo. "We don't need another Combatant Command," they cried, "we are doing just fine."

The reality was far different, though. Chris, along with a few others, knew the system was broken. At its worst, someone called Chris a traitor for making such a proposal and tried to weaponize the media against him. Needless to say, Chris was correct *and* he prevailed. Those experiences taught him to navigate the halls of the Capitol like a switchboard operator, making new connections as he needed.

Before we headed to DC on this first trip, he coached me on the ground rules. We were not *lobbyists*. That word meant one who cultivated political relationships with the expectation of results favorable to one's industry.

In contrast, we would not ask for anything. Chris reminded me: We have an eager audience here. They are hungry for information. You've been drinking from the fire hose for years. But these folks dwell in an information desert. Your job is to educate them. Let them ask the questions, Lue. When they do, we answer as honestly, and as clearly, as possible.

So we went and talked and talked.

When we provided our briefings, we were asked, "This is huge! How can we change the status quo on this topic?"

"Well, it would help to have more transparency from DoD."

"How can we do that?"

"If there was UAP language in a bill, if transparency was the law, it would force them to release more information."

During this period, Chris and I were working quietly and diligently behind the scenes to help Congress understand the complexity of the situation and identify a path forward. We had established a beachhead on Capitol Hill, but we needed a way to maintain momentum and expand our base of support; otherwise we'd never be able to pass the legislation needed to compel DoD and the IC to action on the UAP issue. Chris, who had served for over a decade on Capitol Hill, proposed a simple but brilliant solution: have one of

the oversight committees request an unclassified public report on UAP from the Director of National Intelligence. The beauty of this approach was that it offered a way to elevate the UAP issue and burnish its legitimacy without requiring the expenditure of public funds or the support of the Appropriations Committees. Chris touted the needs for this in op-eds and personal meetings with Senate staff, and even drafted a version of the report requirement, which he posted online for all of us to see.

But Congress was just getting its feet wet with the whole UAP reality. Chris would need to spell out exactly what information such a report would contain, and even where to find it, or else DoD would find a way to squirrel out of the assignment.

By now, the Covid pandemic was in full swing. Chris and I did our homework while the rest of the nation was hunkering down. As Chris noodled away at proposed draft language, the thought never left our minds that if we went too far it was possible that lawmakers—or the president himself—would object. We had to be careful. Each word in any draft language was like a grain of sand on a tiny scale. Each germ of an idea was painstakingly measured before it was inserted into a paragraph. Was this word or idea absolutely necessary? We had no idea how many bites at the apple we would get. The fact that we were offered even one bite was historic.

Our reception in the halls of Congress was downright refreshing. The House and Senate Intelligence Committees, just as an example, are strongly bipartisan, made up of representatives from both sides of the aisle. Normally the two US political parties slug it out, but as I was about to discover, on this particular topic the politicians would move in lockstep.

Why? If you ask me, as they learned more about the disturbing truth, committee members had been seized with a rising sense of injustice. For decades Congress had dutifully funneled appropriations to the Pentagon. Whatever money DoD wanted, they got—*and more*. But for some reason, the same highly placed congressional leaders who are permitted by law to participate in classified briefings rarely heard a peep about UAP. If they inquired about the topic, they got the same message that Chris Mellon had been told for years when he moved in upperechelon intelligence circles: *There's no evidence to suggest UAP are real.*

But now, talking with me, Mellon, and our eyewitness friends, Congress was fired up.

Thankfully, Senator Marco Rubio, the acting chairman of the Senate

Intelligence Committee, was courageous enough to support this important proposal, notwithstanding the inevitable mindless criticism his support would generate from those hostile to the idea of transparency.

In private moments elected leaders or their staffers could not help sharing anecdotes drawn from their personal lives or the lives of family members who had their own encounters with UAP. If you treat the subject as permissible for discussion, people open up in surprising ways. In an age marked by lack of compromise, we found that politicians on both sides of the aisle welcomed dialogue on the issue and shared their personal stories openly with us.

Kirsten Gillibrand, the Democratic senator from New York State who served on the armed services subcommittees, told her staff how she learned of the UAP issue, and how she would spend quality time with her two children watching the show Mellon and I made for History Channel. Tim Burchett, a Republican representative from Tennessee, had also watched. Coincidentally, his district was near Oak Ridge, home to the nation's uranium stockpile and a former World War II "Secret City" of the Manhattan Project and the site of countless UAP sightings. He was particularly alarmed by the connection to US nuclear capabilities. A born-again Christian, Burchett could not help but be intrigued by the possible connection of UAP to the otherworldly visions of Ezekiel and Elijah in the Bible. Burchett was a man on a mission, completely devoted to his constituents and to his faith; not a DC politician, but a blue-collar guy who used to own a trailer repair shop. He respected those who served in our military and pursued the truth.

Every time the Pentagon said "nothing to see here, folks," a courageous pilot or military member would appear publicly saying the opposite. Ultimately Congress decided to believe our men and women in uniform over the bureaucrats.

Occasionally, a leader in Washington would ask me why we had gone to such lengths to push this subject into the light of day. Don't we have other problems to focus on?

Here's how I would answer: In general, I have come to believe that long-running secrets end up disastrous to all nations. Secrets are like perishable food left untouched for too long. Eventually they rot and stink, forcing you to clean out the entire refrigerator. One keeps secrets in the first place to ensure that the enemy doesn't learn something we want to protect. But once a secret becomes widely known, you lose credibility the longer you cling to it. Secrets

kept too long impede scientific progress. In this case, it affects everyone on the planet, and so it's better that all of humanity should know the truth.

On one occasion, a person highly placed in the US government—a person who knew the truth the government had hidden all these years—told me I had embarked on an unwise mission.

"Do you realize," they said, "that by talking about this issue so openly, you are accelerating the chances that we will be invaded?"

This assumes that our friends from out of town have bad intentions. We still don't know that for sure, I said. And I stood firm in my position: it is better for all humans to know the truth of our reality than to permit our governments to keep lying to us.

I asked my acquaintance: "If you have cancer, would you want your doctor to tell you? *Especially* if there is a chance you can get better? I rest my case."

Each time I drove back to the DC area, donning my suit and my Covid mask before heading up to the Hill, I felt encouraged by the progress being made by the plan Chris and I put in motion. We were making enough noise in the press that Jay was getting requests for briefings from members of the White House National Security Council, who then briefed Trump on some level, but I am not sure how much information they actually shared.

Since the Legacy Program and the UAP issue really began in 1947, only some presidents have been briefed by those involved on the basic facts about the situation, but they are not provided with all the details. As Hal mentioned once, and according to some involved in Legacy UAP, presidents simply don't have a need to know everything, and they will only temporarily be in their position.

As far as I know, the following US presidents were briefed in some way: Truman, Eisenhower, JFK, LBJ, Carter, Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and Trump.

Carter came across as an open-minded, intellectually curious leader, one who matter-of-factly revealed the existence of the psychic Stargate program to the media. Nixon was considered a loose cannon, so he was not taken completely into confidence, but I have reason to believe he was shown images of nonhuman bodies.

I was told Gerald Ford was not briefed, probably because he had too much on his plate picking up the pieces of the Watergate debacle. Maybe the Legacy Program thought he would tell the world. Hardly a UAP neophyte,

however, Ford had grappled with the subject early in his congressional career, during the famous 1966 sightings in Michigan. The Ford Presidential Library has since released at least fifteen documents related to the notorious Blue Book “swamp gas” finding, of which Ford remained forever skeptical.

As for Reagan, I have reason to believe that the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), nicknamed the Star Wars program, which Reagan championed, was concerned with UAP, not just nukes. Reagan’s biographers also describe him as fascinated by the topic, and we know that he once suggested to his USSR counterpart, Mikhail Gorbachev, that the US and the USSR should work together in the event of an alien invasion. In a United Nations speech, he said:

> Can we and all nations not live in peace? In our obsession with antagonisms of the moment, we often forget how much unites all the members of humanity. Perhaps we need some outside, universal threat to make us recognize this common bond. I occasionally think how quickly our differences worldwide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world. And yet, I ask you, is not an alien force already among us?

We did in fact manage to insert language in the second Covid bill stipulating that the DoD had to release a UAP report by the following summer. Such a report would not require spending new dollars; DoD already had the data. Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, then chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, was the chief sponsor of the bill. If you look at what appears in Senate Report 116-233, you’ll find that much of the wording came directly from Chris Mellon’s pen.

> The Committee remains concerned that there is no unified, comprehensive process within the Federal Government for collecting and analyzing intelligence on unidentified aerial phenomena, despite the potential threat. The Committee understands that the relevant intelligence may be sensitive; nevertheless, the Committee finds that the information sharing and coordination across the Intelligence Community has been inconsistent. . . .
>
> Therefore, the Committee directs the DNI, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and the heads of such other agencies as the

> Director and Secretary jointly consider relevant, to submit a report within 180 days of the date of enactment of the Act, to the congressional intelligence and armed services committees on unidentified aerial phenomena (also known as "anomalous aerial vehicles"), including observed airborne objects that have not been identified. . . .
>
> The report shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

The full language in the bill amounted to 422 words and was unprecedented. Not since the 1960s had Congress instructed the DoD to take any action regarding UAP, let alone issue an *unclassified* report that could be shared with the American people and the world.

President Trump signed the Covid bill into law in late December 2020. I would argue that most Americans never knew that bill included historic legislation about UAP.

I greeted the passage of the legislation with elation. I also knew that we couldn't hold our breaths. From the moment the bill became law, the DoD would have six months to crank out a report on a subject it had largely ignored for seventy-five years. In Pentagon time, six months is nothing.

Mellon and I were running full throttle on our public engagement. We had appeared on news platforms like CNN and Fox News many times, and now arguably one of the most influential news programs in television history decided it wanted to cover the UAP topic for the first time in its decades of investigative journalism. We were floored. This was an award-winning show that *everyone* watched: all the politicians, DoD officials, intel community officials, and their families. Next thing I knew, Mellon, Senator Rubio, Commander Fravor, Lieutenant Commander Dietrich, me, and some others participated in what would go on to be a historic *60 Minutes* story.

It aired in May 2021 and went on to be one of the most-watched segments in the history of the show. I was told well over 20 million people watched it and that the number keeps going up. This was a major win for disclosure, escalating our public engagement, and changing the tone of the conversation. And it happened at exactly the right time.

The result of all the hard and strategic work to get a public report was the widely publicized "Preliminary Report" produced by the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) and delivered in June 2021. It was in many ways

inadequate, but it did identify 144 military UAP incidents from 2004 through June 2021. And as the climate around the UAP topic improved, stigma started to fade, and members of the military began to realize they could and should report UAP incidents, the number of reports quickly increased. This official government UAP report had proven so important, and of such great public interest, that Congress then required it on an annual basis. This is proving to be a critically important way to ensure the public and Congress are aware of how extensive and serious the UAP issue remains.

I regard this as one of Chris's greatest contributions to our overall efforts and to history in general. It was his idea, he made it happen, and it was a key strategic move at a critical time. I say "one of " because we have had an extraordinary degree of collaboration on all our efforts since the day I met Chris.

Without Chris and Jay, the plans we put in motion never would have worked. And they are more than collaborators. They are friends.

In true DoD fashion, what they provided to Congress was a watered-down version of recent incidents, beginning with the 2004 *Nimitz* case, but it moved things forward *a lot* . And we were building momentum.

The report concluded that these UAP were likely not weather anomalies and represented something . . . *tangible*. All the cases in the report went back only a year and a half, with the *Nimitz* being the stated exception. The report focused primarily on Navy reports, and claimed that Air Force information was not yet available and that only 10 percent of all encounters for that time frame were actually reported. By that assessment, a staggering 1400 incidents from 2019 to 2021 remained unreported. I believe this alone raised eyebrows and convinced legislators to pay attention.

Seventy-five years after Roswell, the Air Force was still holding out on the American people. The then secretary of the Air Force, Frank Kendall, told reporters that he was not sure that UAP warranted his attention. While not denying that these objects were real, he called for evidence that these objects were a threat before he and his colleagues would lift a finger. As I've mentioned, that struck me as a logical fallacy. If you don't know what something is, how can you dismiss it as a threat?

Jenn's words, "Bring it on!," resonated in my heart once more. A day or two later, I was asked about Secretary Kendall's response to the UAP report. My response was something along the lines of "Mr. Secretary, may I remind you who you work for? You don't get to decide what is or is not a priority.

The American people do."

Think about how absurd it is for almost all the reports of unidentified anomalous phenomena to come from the Navy, not the Air Force.

Fired up, I engaged with the public on social media and in the press. I put out a statement that read:

> The American people now know a small portion of what I and my colleagues in the Pentagon have been privy to: that these UAP are not secret US technology, that they do not seem to belong to any known allies or adversaries, and that our intelligence services have yet to identify a terrestrial explanation for these extraordinary vehicles. Out of 144 incidents, the UAP Task Force was only able to identify 1. This conversation is only just beginning.

In July 2021, I got a call from a friend telling me that *People* magazine named me one of the "100 Reasons to Love America." They ranked me No. 62. Chris and Jay should've been on that list with me, but I appreciated this because it was a sign that our public engagement was working.

Even before the UAP report's release, Chris and I were working with our friends on the Hill to insert language into the *next* big bill coming before Congress.

Every year, Congress authorizes the US defense budget in what is called the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The US government spends more on military than any nation. Lately it's been around $800 billion per year.

To the senators, the representatives, and their staff that we called friends, it seemed only right that the DoD should come clean on UAP. Republican senators Roy Blunt of Missouri, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, and Marco Rubio of Florida; Democratic senators Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Martin Heinrich of Arizona; and Democratic representative Ruben Gallego of Arizona all worked together to craft aggressive language, with some help from Chris and me. Chris somehow convinced them that *more is better* when it comes to prescribing what the DoD should do.

Around this time, the Legacy Program and those associated with it, the powers that be, took their pushback to the next level and somehow managed to block the funding that had been appropriated to the UAP Task Force by Congress. At that point, after sixteen years of investigating UAP for the US

government, longer than anyone I'm aware of, Jay decided it was time to retire and head to the private sector, where he could more freely continue his work. Our plan had already achieved so much, but we still had another chapter ahead of us.

Before Jay retired, we worked with Congress to get new legislation proposed that would create a permanent UAP program directly funded by Congress, so no one could block or misuse the funding. This new program would have to report directly to Congress on all UAP matters.

Two days before Thanksgiving in 2021, DoD announced the creation of a new UAP investigation office called the Airborne Object Identification and Management Synchronization Group. AOIMSG for short. (No, I do not know how to pronounce this ridiculous acronym.) The new office would be tucked into the auspices of the OUSD(I). The DoD attracted a great amount of press attention for this move. Headlines about the Pentagon's "new UAP office" appeared on news websites around the globe.

I suspect a lot of people would have bought DoD's gesture hook, line, and sinker if Chris Mellon and I did not spread the word that it was a con. My old office, the OUSD(I), was precisely the same organization that had underplayed and tried to kill AATIP and then the UAP Task Force. As I said on social media, this is akin to giving an alcoholic the key to the liquor cabinet.

The Pentagon's playbook, really controlled by those in the Legacy Program pulling the strings, is hilariously predictable. Whenever they think the truth may emerge, they try to change and control the narrative.

Congress sensed that DoD wanted to steer the office toward studying *man-made* air trash and clutter and away from UAP, using the term "Temporarily Non-attributable Objects" instead of UAP. Seeing the game that DoD was playing, a few days later, Congress revised the upcoming bills, stating that DoD could *not* treat man-made objects as part of their UAP investigations. If a UAP was found to be man-made, the new permanent UAP office Congress wanted would have to delegate that case to another DoD department. Only objects that had no known human origin could be defined as a UAP. This language, if passed, would prevent DoD from simply chalking up everything to balloons and plastic bags in the atmosphere. Furthermore, Congress now included space *and* undersea anomalies as part of the UAP definition, and changed it from "unidentified *aerial* phenomena" to "unidentified anomalous phenomena," to cover all domains.

We were infuriated by DoD's attempt to circumvent the intent of Congress. It was a weak attempt to put the genie back in the bottle. The DoD had bet that lawmakers would insist on dropping the carefully crafted UAP language at the first utterance of the ungainly AOIMSG. "Why do we need this language if DoD already has a UAP office?" the legislators were all supposed to say. Instead, we made sure it got Congress more determined to cause change.

Mellon, I, and our friends worked the phones, and generated more noise online, even over that long holiday weekend.

If this language passed, the DoD could no longer sweep the phenomena under the rug. Congress would establish a permanent UAP office that had to deliver briefings to Congress and the American people on a regular basis. They had to investigate the aerospace and biological implications of UAP. And they must employ what is known as the "1 percent doctrine" in all their methodology. If there's a 1 percent chance that an encounter is a threat to the military or the American people, they must investigate it. They will no longer get a free pass to dismiss a report simply because they "don't know what it is."

I give those six lawmakers I mentioned and their teams an enormous amount of credit. They patiently allowed Mellon and me to provide information and arrange for eyewitnesses to brief elected officials who had any doubts. We built a proverbial conveyor belt by which Congress could get their information unfiltered. I also made sure I was not present for many of the meetings and interviews, because I wanted to ensure those meetings between lawmakers and our eyewitnesses remained fair and impartial. I did not want to be a distraction.

From the outside, it probably looked easy. But in reality, it was touch-and-go the whole way. The enemies of transparency were arrayed against us. The DoD certainly did not want this language inserted into the bill. They did not want Congress and the American people looking over their shoulder on the issue of UAP. They wanted to do what they'd always done—bury it.

In September 2021, the House passed the bill and advanced it to the Senate.

Mellon and I stayed on top of our efforts to engage the public while educating elected officials and their staffs, providing them direct contact with eyewitnesses and undeniable data.

In November 2021 I was honored to find out that *GQ* magazine in the UK

named me one of the heroes of 2021 for my impact on culture by being a voice of the disclosure effort. This was a clear indicator that two of our strategic pillars, international engagement and media engagement, were paying off. For the record, however, I have always been uncomfortable with public attention and praise because I know there are far many more people deserving of the credit than me.

The Senate finally passed the bill on December 15, 2021—the UAP language untouched—and sent it to President Biden for his signature.

Former senator Harry Reid—who was our ally and champion at AATIP, who stood up for me in the painful months after my resignation when DoD was trying to erase and smear me—continued to be a major supporter throughout this entire process. From validating us to other elected officials to vouching for us with the *60 Minutes* producers, what-ever help we needed, he was there. All the while, he was in the final days of a three-year battle with pancreatic cancer. Some of his critics mocked his support of the UAP issue, but he was truly ahead of the curve.

We all knew he was near death. You could see the toll the disease was taking on him. Poignantly, Senator Reid said he would keep fighting his cancer until Biden signed the act. In honor of his longtime support, we kept Senator Reid briefed on the situation to the very end. His wife, Landra, and loyal assistant, Katie, were angels of mercy during this time.

Biden signed the second UAP bill into law two days after Christmas in 2021. It was another historic moment for the history books. A day later, my old friend Harry Reid died peacefully in his sleep. He was true to his word. May he rest in peace.

In May 2022, one requirement of the new law went on full display. Congress held a historic public hearing on UAP. The hearing lasted ninety minutes. The very fact that it happened was monumental, and it made it clear to many civilians and elected leaders that they needed to press the UAP issue going forward, and that DoD was covering up the topic. Unlike the 180-day report, which covered 143 unresolved cases, the DoD witnesses revealed that they now had more than 400 logged in the last year. The hearing confirmed UAP are indeed real and not a glitch of technological systems or a weather anomaly. It confirmed UAP are *not* our technology and are a potential threat to air safety and our national security. And when asked about any research into other UAP programs, the head of the Pentagon’s intelligence efforts, Ronald Moultrue, said, “Other than AATIP and Blue Book, no.” This was a

silent victory for me. At least now the Pentagon acknowledged the existence of my old program, AATIP, and its efforts focusing on UAP. All this under oath. And Congressman Mike Gallagher introduced the Wilson/Davis memo, mentioned earlier, into the Congressional Record on national television. Another shocking admission which completely took me by surprise was that the Pentagon was unaware of the incursions of UAP near sensitive nuclear facilities. The Pentagon admitted it was unaware of its own reporting going back to instances including ICBMs being taken offline. Had the Pentagon done even a cursory review of its own records, it would have realized that the Pentagon itself had written reports on these incursions. Those are just some of the highlights, and I encourage you to watch the entire hearing online. Needless to say, it was an embarrassing moment for my old office, OUSD(I).

In July 2022, AARO—the All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office—was announced. This new permanent UAP office had to report to Congress. At least its new name was now easier to pronounce.

The summer of 2022 continued to prove that our tactics were bearing fruit. A farcical power play sprang up between Congress and DoD on the subject of UAP. In many ways, the drama was a rerun of the previous summer. Every time Congress provisionally inserted UAP language into upcoming bills, observers at DoD tried to head them off at the pass.

Congress pushed the proposed legislation into the annual National Defense Authorization Act that year—the budget that spells out what money Congress will outlay to the Department of Defense in the following year (in this case, 2023). I contributed to the creation of the language and worked hard to get Congress members to help support it, but I must say this one was truly Chris's magnum opus. Chris perfected the language Congress ran with and he masterfully worked his relationships to get all the support the proposed legislation needed.

The language would leave no doubt as to the veracity of the UAP issue. For example, it described how this new office would report to Congress on all cases pertaining to UAP *from January 1, 1945, on* . That date was critical. Nineteen forty-five was the year that marked the deployment of the atomic bomb and soon after that the Roswell crash.

The language detailed how the intelligence community would support this new UAP office. They would, for example, set up a database where military personnel could report UAP. It also provided protection from reprisals for those who came forward with their stories. This meant that anyone—civilian

or military—who ever signed an NDA relating to UAP would be free to speak to Congress in a classified setting. Engineers who analyzed legacy crash materials could finally talk. Pilots and radio operators could finally talk. Members of highly secretive crash retrieval teams could finally talk. And it would be illegal to fire them, punish them, or take action to ruin their pensions, careers, or security clearances in response. In fact, whistleblowers could sue to recover damages.

The day this detail hit the news, the naval pilot Ryan Graves—a key eyewitness in the USS *Roosevelt* sightings—used Twitter to summarize the shift in congressional thinking. "This is a watershed moment," he wrote. "The Senate is explicitly stating . . . we have sufficient evidence of non-man-made objects to mandate study of them by law. Listening yet?"

How did I know that the work we had been doing was paying off? Two ways:

First, the stigma was dying. The public, media, academia, and Congress were all beginning to talk openly about UAP. Mainstream news coverage of the topic was at an all-time high. And several moments stand out: I met with Harvard University students participating in seminars at the Galileo Project, which is charged with mapping ways to investigate life in the universe. Their interest and excitement was infectious. At the National Intelligence University in Washington, DC, I spoke to an elite audience of young analysts and two-star generals who represent the future of the American intelligence community. They could not have been more engaged. Garry Nolan and Jacques Vallée published their academic paper on the mysterious Iowa UAP materials in a peer-reviewed scientific journal, *Progress in Aerospace Sciences*. It was the first time that Nolan, a professor at Stanford's medical school, had ever published in an aerospace journal, and the first time this academic journal had published a serious paper on UAP. The long academic revulsion for UAP was slowly being decimated.

Not a single one of these things would have been possible, or even thinkable, seven years ago. They're only happening now because our joint advocacy and visibility has smashed the stigma long associated with UAP. What will happen when a new breed of leaders—military, engineers, researchers, special agents—make their way into the system? How long can truth stay hidden?

I started to see us heading into an era of renewed creativity and optimism. How many young people will be inspired to enter fields of physics,

engineering, the military, and technology when they know for certain that humanity is not the only intelligent life in the universe and that we humans can push far past the boundaries of reality as we know it?

The other way I knew our efforts were working was that our progress was met with fierce opposition. Throughout that year, various elements in government clamored for face-to-face meetings with lawmakers so they could vigorously protest the UAP whistleblower reprisal language. “We *must* be able to prosecute whistleblowers!” they argued. “We must be able to sic the FBI on former employees who talk out of line.” They wanted Congress to back off on that wording. Clearly, the higher the stakes, the more nervous those at the heart of the cover-up got.

And as for my longtime nemesis at DoD, Garry Reid? He was reassigned to DIA as a “special advisor.” The long-running inspector general investigation into alleged sexual harassment and other claims against him had concluded. I don’t relish anyone’s misfortune, even if that person caused me and my family pain. There was a time when Garry was a war hero and did great things for his country. I am grateful for his past service and military leadership and I prefer to remember him in that light. But he was gone now and the healing could begin. Progress could be made.

Shortly after Garry’s reassignment, the IG informed me that they had also dismissed my whistleblower reprisal complaint against the Defense Department. The fact that I’d been able to keep my security clearances, they argued, was proof that no negative consequences had occurred. A fine example of DoD logic at its best, but I took it as a win. As for unfair reprisals and abuse of power, they had reassigned Garry Reid from the OUSD(I) and perhaps felt they did their duty to make me whole. Later, during an in-person conversation with the IG, they acknowledged that what was done to me was incredibly wrong. Again, though, they explained my clearance remained intact so therefore there were no negative repercussions.

Around this time, the Pentagon also did the unthinkable: they told the world that I, Luis D. Elizondo, exist. A spokesperson confirmed to the media: “Mr. Elizondo provides technical advice on a variety of classified topics for the US Space Force.”

Suffice to say, the Space Force remains a fascinating endeavor to bring cutting-edge aerospace technology to the realm of space, and they of course are concerned with UAP. They are amazing people with amazing leadership.

When I heard this, a measure of grim satisfaction rippled through me.

Finally, after five years, the Pentagon uttered a single true statement about me.

In July 2022, Congress unanimously voted for inclusion of the most historic UAP legislation written at that point in the National Defense Authorization Act for the fiscal year 2023.

Our efforts continued as the Senate considered the NDAA and its UAP language, while powerful forces worked against us. The year was flying by and many felt the UAP language would eventually be cut or watered down.

On December 15, 2022, the Senate approved the NDAA with the UAP language and sent it to Biden to sign. We were so close to achieving change that was unimaginable just a short time ago. But the powerful forces were relentless, just as we were, and we worried each day until . . .

On December 23, 2022, President Biden signed the historic UAP legislation into law when he signed the NDAA.

The UAP legislation language is fifteen pages and available online. I highly suggest you read it all very carefully, because it will leave you with no doubt at all about the truth. Remember, Congress, the Senate, and the president of the United States all signed this language into law for a reason. In the meantime, I'm proud to say it included protection for whistleblowers so they can legally break their NDAs to speak confidentially with select members of Congress in a classified setting without consequences; acknowledgment of the capture, recovery, and reverse-engineering of UAP and action to cause reporting on these matters to Congress; acknowledgment of health issues caused by UAP and action to cause reporting on these matters to Congress; acknowledgment of the Cold War race playing out with other nations and action to cause reporting on this to Congress; the establishment of the AARO, and reporting to Congress on all UAP activity since January 1, 1945, including a compilation and itemization of the key historical records of the involvement of the intelligence community with unidentified anomalous phenomena; any program or activity that was protected by restricted access that has not been explicitly and clearly reported to Congress; successful or unsuccessful efforts to identify and track unidentified anomalous phenomena; and any efforts to obfuscate, manipulate public opinion, hide, or otherwise provide incorrect unclassified or classified information about unidentified anomalous phenomena or related activities. And that's not even close to everything covered.

Hopefully you read the details online carefully, or, better yet, a few times.

It’s truly historic and eye-opening. Congress put this specific language into the National Defense Authorization Act, and President Biden made it law.

For the past seven years, I have asked myself if I did the right thing going public. If I could contribute to real change. If all the hurtful nonsense I had to deal with was worth it. The signing into law of the historic UAP language gave me a simple answer: You’re damn right it was worth it!

We had made more progress than I had thought was possible, but I had no idea how quickly things would heat up from there.

CHAPTER 24

THE NEXT LEVEL OF DISCLOSURE

The year 2023 was big. It brought historic moments of success and a loss that will impact me every day for the rest of my life.

The year started with a new public report on UAP activity released by the Pentagon, reporting over three hundred UAP events *just since 2021*, scores of incidents with multiple sensor systems, multiple witnesses. And that was just the unclassified events.

Meanwhile, the new UAP whistleblower legislation led to even more credible military and intelligence witnesses coming forward and telling the world what they knew about the deeply hidden program to capture, reverse-engineer, and exploit UAP.

One of those whistleblowers was my friend and colleague David Grusch. David was a National Reconnaissance Office employee and worked for the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). He was those agencies' rep on the UAP Task Force. Dave also worked with me at Space Force and helped contribute to the UAP Task Force as well. Not only did Dave tell Congress and the inspector general what he knew about the Legacy Program, but he also went public and did a series of interviews telling the world what he knew. Among other points, Dave said:

> The UAP Task Force was refused access to a broad crash retrieval program, retrieving nonhuman origin technical vehicles, you know, call it spacecraft, if you will, nonhuman exotic origin vehicles that have either landed or crashed. . . . There's a sophisticated disinformation campaign targeting the US populace, which is extremely unethical and immoral.

Sadly, this amazing moment was swiftly followed by an immeasurable loss. Shortly after learning David was going public, I received the heartbreaking news that my father had passed away in his sleep. It was Father's Day, the day before my birthday. In my last conversation with him, he let me know how much he loved me and how proud he was of everything I had done to stand up for what I knew was right. My father lived an incredible life, and I'm grateful he got to see how some of my efforts had started to lead toward real change in our government. I take comfort in my belief that he and my mother are helping guide me until I see them again.

A month later, in July 2023, members of Congress held another historic bipartisan UAP hearing. This time the hearing had highly credible military witnesses, Commander Fravor, Lieutenant Graves, and Dave Grusch, who were now testifying to the American people in Congress *under oath*. This was a tremendously proud moment, to watch my friends and colleagues bravely testifying before Congress, the American people, and the entire world. They were compelled to share the truth, and they are heroes for doing so. The world watched as these men spoke about the recovery of nonhuman bodies and technology, the deeply hidden program to recover and reverse-engineer nonhuman technology, and anomalous transmedium vehicles that violate our airspace, defy our understanding of physics, and would be impossible to defend against.

My hope was that these individuals who had bravely come forward to testify would embolden and encourage more people, more witnesses, more members of the Department of Defense and the intelligence community, to do the same thing.

The sad reality, however, was there were still those in the Pentagon who did not support these developments. Information was provided to a journalist that tried to paint David as unreliable in a story that used anonymous sources to smear a decorated combat veteran with accusations I won't dignify by repeating them. In essence, the press and the Pentagon punished David for doing the very thing they asked all of us to do.

On a positive note, following that hearing, Congress was more determined than ever to get to the bottom of the UAP issue and uncover the truth about the hidden program.

In the summer of 2023, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York, Senator Mike Rounds of South Dakota, Senator Rubio, and Senator Gillibrand sponsored the most historic UAP legislation yet, the UAP

Disclosure Act.

This historic legislation proves that Congress is aware of the Legacy Program's possession of nonhuman bodies and advanced technology not made here on earth and not made by human beings. It shows that Congress now knows the truth and they want the American people to be informed of the reality of this topic as well.

It proposed that the US government be able to exercise eminent domain over biological evidence of nonhuman intelligence and any type of recovered technology of nonhuman origin that is in the possession of any element of the government or defense contractors.

Another aspect of this legislation creates a review board that answers directly to the president in order to create a road map for controlled disclosure to the American people.

The language in this historic piece of legislation is a direct result of whistleblowers briefing members of Congress and their staff at the classified level and even under oath about the reality of nonhuman intelligence and the Legacy Program's efforts to capture, collect, and reverseengineer these vehicles of nonhuman origin and, in some cases, collect nonhuman specimens.

Think about that for a moment. Let it sink in. These are individuals who reported to Congress, who had direct knowledge of and worked with the Legacy Program to capture and reverse-engineer vehicles that were made by nonhuman intelligence.

Senator Schumer put out this statement:

> The American public has a right to learn about technologies of unknown origins, non-human intelligence, and unexplainable phenomena. We are not only working to declassify what the government has previously learned about these phenomena but to create a pipeline for future research to be made public. I am honored to carry on the legacy of my mentor and dear friend, Harry Reid, and fight for the transparency that the public has long demanded surround these unexplained phenomena.

Oh, how far we have come.

Throughout the fall of 2023, Senate leadership requested my help giving them clarity on the facts as they fought for and sharpened the language in the

UAP Disclosure Act. I quietly made multiple trips from my home to DC, where I logged many hours alone in a SCIF with our nation's leaders. Others who are aware of the facts also did their part to help the Senate. Conscious of how much has changed since 2017, I couldn't have been prouder of our leaders in the Senate. They were stepping up like never before to get to the bottom of this and bring the truth out to the public.

Unfortunately, members of the House, specifically Congressman Mike Turner, who is very much supported by the defense contractors involved in the Legacy Program, fought against the UAP Disclosure Act and killed much of what the act tried to make law.

Still, Senators Schumer and Rounds fought for the act to get passed with some historic wins, and in late December 2023 Biden signed it into law.

Most notably, the new law pulls the funding of any activity involving UAP that has not been approved by the appropriate committees. In essence, it makes it very illegal for the Legacy Program or anyone to use taxpayers' money for UAP-related matters unless it's been approved by Congress, which hopefully will lead to Congress finally having oversight.

The new law also directs the National Archives to collect government documents about "unidentified anomalous phenomena, technologies of unknown origin, and nonhuman intelligence." Any UAP-related records not already disclosed must be made public within twenty-five years of their creation, unless the president determines that they must remain classified for national security reasons. But the proposal for a presidential review board was killed, so, as Senator Schumer publicly said, "It is really an outrage the House didn't work with us on adopting our proposal for a review board. It means that declassification of UAP records will be largely up to the same entities that have blocked and obfuscated their disclosure for decades."

That said, the pushback has only made the Senate leadership more committed to bringing out the truth. Congress is already circling the wagons, making plans to try again. And try again we will. Over and over until we overcome the very last hurdle.

Seven years ago, if you were to tell me that this law would be passed and we would have changed the entire mentality inside the government and in the public eye surrounding this topic, I probably would have said you're crazy. Yet here we are.

CHAPTER 25

NEW HORIZONS

When visitors make their way out to my remote part of the world, I enjoy taking them on a hike around Devils Tower, the natural wonder that played such a huge role in the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Every tree encircling the tower drips with spirit threads, tokens left by modern-day Native Americans in memory of their ancestors. This area feels deeply spiritual, and I often ask my guests to stop, pause, and listen. What they hear is the sound of nature, the way it was meant to be heard.

The night sky is incredibly vast where I live. Some Indigenous people say the stars are the flip side of our reality, bonfires in the sky that mark the encampments of their ancestors.

I do not have to look far to recall my own origins. Sitting outdoors with my dad when I was a kid, I would listen to him expound on the constellations and the wonders of the universe. He had a gift for using simple language to explain difficult concepts. My mother gave me the gift of empathy and love and being open to new ideas. They sent me into manhood with precisely the set of skills and talents I needed for the life I embarked upon.

They were far from perfect, but maybe that's what actually made them perfect parents. After all, in the aftermath of every collapsing supernova is a new star fighting for its survival. In the rubble of my parents' marriage was me.

I cannot shake the thought that the people before us were closer to a truth that we today only perceive as mysteries, but I don't think that will remain the case for long.

We are closer than ever to having a new truth thrust upon us, perhaps like the Inca when Spanish conquistadors first landed on the beaches of their shores. It's not going to be easy, though. Massive forces are still arrayed against us, and they have the advantage of supremely powerful institutions

supporting them.

My colleagues and I helped contribute to the modern movement for disclosure and will continue to work toward our cause on a daily basis, but now that the cat is out of the bag, the real threat to those who want to keep the truth hidden is *you* . You—the public—*are* a powerful force that can be wielded to ensure we have 100 percent full disclosure. It's important you make your voice heard loudly. Do your part to help usher in a new era for humanity. A new era in which every human knows we likely share this planet and the entire universe with other intelligent life that is far more advanced than us. A new era where all of humanity is united by the profound common bond of being human.

Those of us who are fighting the fight need your help. We need your passion, and we need your support. To do this, I ask you to have frank conversations with your family and friends. Share what you have learned and read within the pages of this book. Let them know that you think it is important to speak openly and seriously about the topic. If there are young people in your family, let them know that the world of science and technology hungrily awaits their imagination, creativity, and intellect. Their hands and minds will build the vessels that will take our species into a new frontier and solve the many problems ahead of us.

Reach out to your elected representatives. They are coming aboard more each day, but we cannot allow them to become lax, or to control the narrative. You, as a citizen of this planet, have as much to say about this issue as they do. Don't let them ever forget that. If you don't know who they are, go to https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative.

This fight demands courage. It starts with talking. We can no longer stick our heads in the sand and pretend we are alone in the universe. We *know* we are not alone.

Will we unite as a species to communicate with these new potential friends—or will we doom ourselves through unwise policy and violence?

Humanity has never been in this position or experienced what is ahead of us. If we make the wrong choices from here, we may erase humanity from the universe. If we come together and triumph, we will prosper and march into a future that no generation of humans has ever really imagined.

If we are successful, the last chapter of this book will one day be the beginning of another one that will hopefully be written by our children.

Are we ready? That is one of the questions I can't answer. Only you can.

APPENDIX

DOCUMENTS

To read the historic UAP language in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act, signed into law by President Joe Biden in December 2022, go to: https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title50-section3373b&num=0&edition=prelim.

To read Senator Harry Reid's Request to Put the Advanced Aerospace Threat and Identification Program (AAITP) under Special Access Protection, go to: https://www.dia.mil/FOIA/FOIA-Electronic-Reading-Room/FileId/170015/.

To read the UAP language in the Covid bill signed by President Trump, go to: https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/publications/intelligence-authorization-act-fiscal-year-2021.

To read the Wilson/Davis memo, go to: https://www.congress.gov/117/meeting/house/114761/documents/HHRG-117-IG05-20220517-SD001.pdf.

To read the recent public UAP report from the Pentagon, go to: https://media.defense.gov/2024/Mar/08/2003409233/-1/-1/0/DOPSR-CLEARED-508-COMPLIANT-HRRV1-08-MAR-2024-FINAL.PDF.

To read highlights of the historic UAP language in the 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, signed into law by Biden in December of 2023, go to: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-118publ31/uslm/PLAW-118publ31.xml#d7546e80896; https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-118publ31/uslm/PLAW-118publ31.xml#d7546e68608; https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-118publ31/uslm/PLAW-118publ31.xml#d7546e170428.

To read Hal's paper on ultraterrestrial models, go to: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Harold-Puthoff/publication/363346030_ULTRATERRESTRIAL_MODELS/links/6318a625873eca MODELS.pdf?origin=publication_detail.

Email between Neill Tipton and me, transferring my AATIP responsibilities to Neill in 2017, several years after the Pentagon claimed that AATIP had ended and that I had no involvement in AATIP. Until May 2024, the Pentagon had asserted all of my emails had been deleted, but this email was finally released after a FOIA appeal was won.

Elizondo, Luis D CIV (US)

From: Tipton, Neill T SES OSD OUSD INTEL (US)
Sent: Tuesday, October 3, 2017 8:19 AM
To: Elizondo, Luis D CIV (US)
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: DRAFT DepSECDEF letter (UNCLASSIFIED)
Signed By: neill.t.tipton.civ@mail.mil

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Getting spun back up. Will read and get thoughts back today or tomorrow (at Ft Meade half the day today).

-----Original Message-----
From: Elizondo, Luis D CIV (US)
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2017 11:23 AM
To: Tipton, Neill T SES OSD OUSD INTEL (US) <neill.t.tipton.civ@mail.mil>
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: DRAFT DepSECDEF letter (UNCLASSIFIED)

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Greetings Neil,
Per SECDEF's Front Office guidance to you and me, I took the liberty of drafting a memo at the Unclassified level that helps you better assume the new responsibilities for AATIP. At your convenience, please review (it's very short on purpose) and let me know if you want me to put more meet on it.
[redacted] same with you please...No pride in authorship, just want to make sure we answer the mail for the front office.

Standing by...

V/R
Lue

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED
CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

Classified By:
Derived From:
Declassify On:
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Thanks Lue. I'm around next week, but then gone week of the 25th on a/l. For specific date/time, just work with Catherine - I'm not allowed to muck around with my calendar... (but I am in the building all day the 20th).

Yep, have a discussion with Stean tomorrow.
Thanks
Neill

-----Original Message-----
From: Elizondo, Luis, D., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Sent: Monday, September 11, 2017 3:41 PM
To: Tipton, Neill, T., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Subject: Update

Greetings Neil,
A couple quick items for you...

1) Front office is aware that you are now part of this endeavor and they are happy with the decision. We will plan on you meeting Brad and Kate next week.

2) How does this Wednesday look for an hour discussion?

3) Lastly, Stean Maas is a friend of the program. I believe you may be speaking with him tomorrow. He is a good man. Just thought you should know...

Email between Neill and me, indicating Secretary of Defense Front Office knowledge and approval for the transfer of my AATIP authorities over to Neill.

Elizondo, Luis, D., Mr., OSD OUSDI

From: Tipton, Neill, T., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Sent: Friday, August 25, 2017 11:17 AM
To: Elizondo, Luis, D., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Subject: RE: Program Meeting

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Thanks Lue. All good - although, at some point I need to know what this actually "is"....
Thanks
Neill

-----Original Message-----
From: Elizondo, Luis, D., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Sent: Friday, August 25, 2017 10:35 AM
To: Tipton, Neill, T., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Subject: RE: Program Meeting

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Neil, as discussed, thanks for your time with this. As the principal SES in your Directorate, I think you are certainly the appropriate representative to help take our effort to a new level.

I think by now you probably already know I have been managing another "nuanced" effort within the Department for some time. In fact, even when I worked for you years ago your probably guessed I was also working another effort for the Department given some of our discussion and raw video.

I can't overstate how important I believe this portfolio is with respect to our collective National Security. So you are aware, I have already laid the foundations with SECDEF's front office (and they support it) to transfer the portfolio under you given your new focus on Special Projects for the Department and USD(I). The front office will also brief up the new USD(I) once he arrives but id hesitant to brief anyone else at this point so please keep this at our level for now. Initially, I was going to approach John Pede but when he handed over the reigns to you, I figured you would be the perfect fit.

In the coming weeks, I ask you to attend a few meetings with me at the front office in order that you can meet the rest of the players within the building. Later, I will also introduce you to some of our partners in industry and other agencies who are helping lead the charge. Ultimately, I will need your help analyzing and exploiting material (this was the area Mark Sanders was particularly helpful with). I have a facility I need to show you that you will be able to use.

As always, I sincerely appreciate your help with this and look forward to working with/for you once again. I can't think of a better guy to be involved with this.

Best,
Lue

P.S. let me know when you want to go kill some fish! I have access to an awesome 35 Trojan that is a serious fishing machine in the Bay! I'll buy the bait!

Email between me and another individual in AATIP, coordinating a meeting with Neill to discuss the transfer of AATIP responsibilities.

-----Original Message-----
From: Tipton, Neill, T., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2017 8:05 AM
To: Elizondo, Luis, D., Mr., OSD OUSDI; [redacted]
Cc: Arter, Harry, E., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Subject: RE: Program Meeting

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO
==========

Thanks Lue.

Added Harry (TCSP CoS) to help with scheduling.
Thanks
Neill

-----Original Message-----
From: Elizondo, Luis, D., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2017 3:17 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: Tipton, Neill, T., Mr., OSD OUSDI
Subject: Program Meeting

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO
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Greetings [redacted],
I briefly spoke to Mr. Neil Tipton (CC'd above) about our collective efforts and the interest expressed by the front office. Upon your return, I recommend we meet with Mr. Tipton briefly in person. He is amicable for a discussion and is aware of Mark Sander's previous portfolio. Mr. Tipton is now the Acting Director, Defense Intelligence for Technical Collection and Special Programs.

Neil, as soon as [redacted] returns from leave, we will schedule a quick meeting as promised. [redacted]

Very Best/Very Respectfully,
Lue
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Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

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Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

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Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

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Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

My official resignation memo to the Secretary of Defense, highlighting the urgent need to address the UAP issue as it relates to US national security and our nuclear weapons and technology.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
5000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-5000

INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM FOR: RECORD

SUBJECT: Letter of Resignation & Differed Retirement

Mr. Secretary;

It has been my sincere honor and pleasure to have served with some of America's finest men and women in both peace time and in war. For over 22 years, I have been blessed to learn from, and work with world-class leadership, you certainly being among the very best.

With that in mind, bureaucratic challenges and inflexible mindsets continue to plague the Department at all levels. This is particularly true regarding the controversial topic of anomalous aerospace threats. Despite overwhelming evidence at both the unclassified and classified levels, certain individuals in the Department remain staunchly opposed to further research on what could be a tactical threat to our pilots, sailors, and soldiers, and perhaps even an existential threat to our national security. In many instances, there seems to be a direct correlation the phenomena exhibits with respect to our nuclear and military capabilities. The Department must take serious the many accounts by the Navy and other Services of unusual aerial systems interfering with military weapon platforms and displaying beyond next generation capabilities. Underestimating or ignoring these potential threats is not in the best interest of the Department no matter the level of political contention. There remains a vital need to ascertain capability and intent of these phenomena for the benefit of the armed forces and the nation.

For this reason, effective 4 October 2017, I humbly submit my resignation in hopes it will encourage you to ask the hard questions: "who else knows?", what are their capabilities?", and "why aren't we spending more time and effort on the issue?". As I transition to a new chapter of my life, please know it has been an honor and privilege of a lifetime to serve with you. Rest assure, no matter where the path of life may lead me, I will always have the best interest of the Department and the American people as my guiding principle.

Luis D. Elizondo
Director
National Programs Special Management Staff
OUSD(I)

Official letter from former Senate Majority Leader and AATIP sponsor Harry Reid. This letter counters the later claims made by the Pentagon that I had no part in AATIP.

HARRY REID

Senate Majority Leader, 2007-2015
Senate Democratic Leader, 2005-2017

United States Senate, 1987-2017
United States House of Representatives, 1983-1987

April 26, 2021

To whom it may concern:

As the United States Senate Majority Leader, I worked with Republican Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska and Democratic Senator Dan Inouye of Hawaii to secure $22 million of funding for what would become known as the Advanced Aerospace Threat Identification Program (AATIP), an unclassified but unpublicized investigatory effort dedicated to studying Unidentified Aerial Phenomena.

As one of the original sponsors of AATIP, I can state as a matter of record Lue Elizondo's involvement and leadership role in this program. Mr. Elizondo is a former intelligence officer who has spent his career working tirelessly in the shadows on sensitive national security matters, including investigating UAPs as the head of AATIP. He performed these duties admirably.

Sincerely,

HARRY REID

STATEMENTS MADE BY CURRENT AND FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS REGARDING UAP:

“There is a lot we still don’t know about these UAP and that is a big problem. We’ve taken some important steps over the last few years to increase transparency and reduce stigmas, but more needs to be done.”

—Senator Marco Rubio

“Understanding UAP is critical to our national security and to maintaining all-domain awareness. Declassifying previous records related to UAP is part of that mission and I’m proud to support this important amendment.”

—Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

“The American people deserve transparency on all issues related to UAP. Our bipartisan effort will protect and better organize government materials related to UAP and promote disclosure of this information.”

—Senator Todd Young

“There’s always the question of is there something else that we simply do not understand that might come extraterrestrially.”

—Avril Haines, Director of National Intelligence

“There is footage and records of objects in the skies that we don’t know exactly what they are. We can’t explain how they move, their trajectory. . . . They did not have an easily explainable pattern. And so I think that people take seriously trying to investigate and figure out what that is.”

—President Barack Obama

“When I was president, we made every attempt to find out everything about Roswell. . . . There are lots of mysteries out there. . . . It should keep us humble. There is a lot of stuff we don’t know.”

—President Bill Clinton

“I have seen some of the videos . . . and they are quite eyebrow-raising. . . . I think it would be presumptuous and arrogant for us to believe there is no other form of life anywhere in the entire universe. . . . I think some of the phenomena we’re going to be seeing continues to be unexplained and might, in fact, be some type of phenomenon that is the result of something that we don’t yet understand and that could involve some type of activity that some might say constitutes a different form of life.”

—John Brennan, former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency

“There is a nonhuman intelligence that is living with us on this planet. . . . We are not alone, and we never have been.”

—Jim Semivan, former senior CIA official

“If UAP do indeed represent a potential threat to our security, then the capabilities, systems, processes, and sources we use to observe and study or analyze these phenomena need to be classified at appropriate levels.”

—Scott Bray, NATO’s Assistant Secretary General for Intelligence and Security

“We couldn’t make it ourselves. Off-world vehicles not made on this earth.”

—Eric Davis, former member of AATIP, current employee of the Aerospace Corporation

“After looking into this, I came to the conclusion that there were reports . . . that there were actual materials that the government and the private sector had in their possession. It is extremely important that information about the discovery of physical materials or retrieved craft come out.”

—Senator Harry Reid

“There are a lot more sightings than have been made public. Some of those have been declassified. When we talk about sightings, we’re talking about objects that have been seen by Navy or Air Force pilots or have been picked up by satellite imagery that frankly engage in actions that are difficult to explain . . . There have been sightings all over the world . . . And there is actually quite a few more than have been made public. So I think it would be healthy for as much as this information to get out there as possible so the American people can see some of the things we have been dealing with.”

—John Ratcliffe, former Director of National Intelligence